WHAT CHEER

JOB DURFEE

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WHAT CHEER

OR

ROGER WILLIAMS IN BANISHMENT

A POEM

BY JOB DURFEE

"And surely betweene my friends of the Bay and Plimouth, I was sorely tost for fourteen weeks, in a bitter cold winter season, not knowing what bed or bread did meane."—*Roger Williams's Letter to Mason.*

REVISED AND EDITED

BY

THOMAS DURFEE

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NOTICE.

THE Editor owes it to the reader to say that, in preparing the following poem for re-publication, he has ventured to omit some of the stanzas and to make changes in others. The stanzas were omitted because, in his opinion, they broke the continuity or retarded the flow of the narration, slackening the reader's interest, and could be omitted with advantage to the poem. The changes have been mostly slight and formal, and, when more extensive, have been made to modify (not the meaning, but) only the expression; making it clearer or more direct, or giving it an easier metrical movement.

PROVIDENCE, R. I.,
May, 1896.

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INTRODUCTION.

TO THE REV. ROMEO ELTON,

PROFESSOR OF LANGUAGES IN BROWN UNIVERSITY.

WHAT time, dear Elton, we were wont to rove
From classic Brown along fair Seekonk's vale,
And, in the murmurs of his storied cove,
Hear barbarous voices still our Founder hail;
E'en then my bosom with young rapture hove
To give to deathless verse the exile's tale;
And every ripple's moan or breeze's sigh
Brought back whole centuries as it murmured by.

But soon the transient dream of youth was gone,
And different labors to our lots were given;
You at the shrine of peace and glory shone,—
Sublime your toils, for still your theme was Heaven;
I, upon life's tempestuous billows thrown,—
A little bark before the tempest driven,—
Strove for a time the surging tide to breast,
And up its rolling mountains sought for rest.

Wearied at length with the unceasing strife,
I gave my pinnace to the harbor's lee,
And left that ocean, still with tempests rife,
To mad ambition's heartless rivalry;
No longer venturing for exalted life,
(For storms and quicksands have no charms for me,)
I, in the listless labors of the swain,
Provoke no turmoil and awake no pain.

To drive the team afield and guide the plough,
Or lead the herds to graze the dewy mead,
Wakes not the glance of lynx-eyed rival now,
And makes no heart with disappointment bleed;

Once more I joy to see the rivers flow.
The lambkins sport, and brindled oxen feed,
And o'er the tranquil soul returns the dream,
Which once she cherished by fair Seekonk's stream.

And when stern winter breathes the chilling storm,
And night comes down on earth in mantle hoar,
I guide the herds and flocks to shelter warm,
And sate their hunger from the gathered store;
Then round the cottage hearth the circle form
Of childhood lovelier than the vernal flower,
Partake its harmless glee and prattle gay,
And soothe my soul to tune the artless lay.

Thus were the numbers taught at first to flow,
Scarce conscious that they bore a tale along;
Beneath my hand still would the pages grow,—
They were not labor, but the joy of song;
Still every line would unsung beauties show
In Williams' soul, and still the strain prolong;
Till, all in rapture with the theme sublime,
My thoughts spontaneous sought the embodying rhyme.

No man was he of heart with love confined,
With blessings only for his bosom friend,—
His glowing soul embraced the human kind,—
He toiled and suffered for earth's farthest end.
Touched by the truths of his unyielding mind,
The human soul did her long bondage rend;
Stern Persecution paused — blushed — dropped the rod:
He strove like man, but conquered like a God.

And now, my Elton, as in hours of ease,
With aimless joy I filled this frail balloon,
So like blind impulse bids me trust the breeze,
And soar on dancing winds to fate unknown;
And be my lot whatever chance decrees—
Let gales propitious gently waft me on,
Or tempests dash far down oblivious night,—
Whate'er the goal, I tempt the heedless flight.

Tiverton, R. I., September, 1832.

WHATCHEER.

CANTO FIRST.

[Scenes. The Fireside at Salem—The Wilderness—The Wigwam.]

I sing of trials, toils and sufferings great,
  Which Father Williams in his exile bore,
That he the conscience-bound might liberate,
  And to the soul her sacred rights restore; —
How, after flying persecution's hate,
  And roving long by Narraganset's shore,
In lone Mooshausick's vale at last he sate,
And gave soul-liberty her Guardian State.

II.

He was a man of spirit true and bold;
  Fearless to speak his thoughts whate'er they were;
His frame, though light, was of an iron mould,
  And fitted well fatigue and change to bear;
For God ordained that he should breast the cold
  And wet of northern wilds in winter drear,
And of red savages protection pray
From Christians, but—more savage still than they.

III.

Midwinter reigned; and Salem's infant town,
  Where late were cleft the forests' skirts away,
Showed its low roofs, and, from their thatching brown
  Sheeted with ice, sent back the sun's last ray;

The school-boys left the slippery hillock's crown,
So keen the blast came o'er the eastern bay;
And pale in vapors thick the sun went down,
And the glassed forest cast a sombre frown.

IV.

The busy house-wife guarded well the door,
That night, against the gathering winter storm —
Did well the walls of all the cot explore
Where'er the snow-gust might a passage form;
And to the couch of age and childhood bore
With anxious care the mantle thick and warm;
And then of fuel gathered ample store,
And bade the blaze up the rude chimney roar.

V.

That night sate Williams, with his children, by
The blazing hearth — his consort at his side;
And often did she heave the heavy sigh
As still her task of needle-work she plied;
And, from the lashes of her azure eye,
Did often brush the starting tear aside;
For they at Spring the savage wilds must try, —
'Twas so decreed by ruthless bigotry.

VI.

Beside the good-man lay his Bible's fair
Broad open page upon the accustomed stand,
And many a passage had he noted there,
Of Israel wandering o'er the desert's sand,
And each assurance he had marked with care,
Made by Jehovah, of the *promised land;*
And from the sacred page had learned to dare
The exile's peril, and his ills to bear.

VII.

And, while the holy book he pondered o'er,
And often told, to cheer his consort's breast,
How, for their faith, the blest apostles bore
The exile's wanderings and the dungeon's pest,
A heavy foot approached his humble door,
And some one, opening, instant entrance prest:
A well-known elder was he, strict and sour, —
Strong in a church ensphered in civil power.

VIII.

"I come," he said in accents hard and stern,
"The Governor's and Council's word to bear:
They are convened, and hear, with deep concern,
That thou abusest their indulgence fair;
Ay, with resentment and abhorrence learn
That still thou dost thy specious tenets share
With visitors, who, smit therewith, discern
Strange godliness in thee, and from us turn.

IX.

"Till spring we gave; and thou wast not to teach
Thy interdicted doctrines here the while,
But curb thy tongue, or with submissive speech
The church regain, and quit thy errors vile;
Of which condition thou committest breach,
And dost her saints from Salem's church beguile;
And plan, 'tis said, to found in easy reach
A State where Antichrist himself may preach.

X.

"From such a State our blessed elders see
The church may, even here, the infection share;
And therefore have the Council made decree,
That to the wilderness thou shalt not fare;

But have their mandate hither sent by me,
That thou to Boston presently repair; —
Where waits a ship now ready for the sea,
To carry back thy heresy and thee."

XI.

Williams replied, "Thy message is unkind, —
In sooth, I think it even somewhat rude;
The snow falls fast, and searching is the wind
And wildly howls through the benighted wood.
The path to Boston is a little blind,
Nor are my nerves in their robuster mood; —
My soul has seldom at her lot repined, —
But to submission now she's disinclined.

XII.

"A voyage to England, and to start to-night
And brave the ocean at this season drear?
'Twould scantly give the hardy tar delight,
Much less my consort and these pledges dear.
Go, and the Council tell, that we're not quite
In health to bear a trial so severe, —
That if we yield 'twill be to lawless might,
And not to their kind feelings or their right."

XIII.

"Much do I grieve," the elder then replied,
"To bear this answer to the Governor;
'Twill show that thou hast Church and State defied,
And will I ween make not a little stir;
And should a pinnace, on the morn espied
O'er yonder waters speeding, bring with her
A squad of soldiers, Underhill their guide,
Be not surprised, but — Williams, quell thy pride!"

XIV.

This said, he turned and hastily withdrew,
And all but Williams now were left in tears;
His wife, still comely, lost her blooming hue,
Her nature yielding to her rising fears;
A giddy whirling passed her senses through,
She almost heard the blazing musketeers,
And trembling to her couch retired to sigh,
And seek relief in prayer to God on high.

XV.

"O! for a friend," still as he paced the floor,
Sire Williams cried, "a friend in my sore need,
To help me now some hidden way explore,
By which my glorious purpose may succeed;
But closed to-night is every cottage door;
Yet there is one who is a friend indeed,
Forever present to the meek and poor —
I will thy counsels, mighty Lord, implore."

XVI.

Here dropt the friend of conscience on his knees,
And prayed, with hand and heart to Heaven upreared;
"O, thou, the God who parted Egypt's seas,
And cloud or fire in Israel's van appeared,
Send down thine angel now, if so it please,
That forth from Church within the State ensphered
He guide my steps, to where there yet may be
A Church not ruled by men, but ruled by Thee."

XVII.

Our Father ceased.— The tempest roared around
With double fury at this moment drear,
The cottage trembled, and the very ground
Did seem to feel the element's career;

With ice and snow the window-panes were bound,
Nor through their dimness could the earth appear,
And still in gusts the wind a passage found
Down the rude chimney with a roaring sound.

XVIII.

A voice divine it did to Williams seem; —
He sat awhile within himself retired,
Then seemed to rouse, as from a transient dream,
Just as the lamp's last flickering ray expired;
Around the room soft falls a quivering beam,
Cast from the brands that on the hearth are fired;
The tempest lulls apace, until he seems
To hear from neighboring woods the panther's screams.

XIX.

"But what is that? — a knocking? — and once more?
Some way-lost wanderer seeks a shelter here;
Ah, wretched man, amid the boisterous roar
Of snow and wind, thy sufferings are severe!"
He raised the bar that kept the outer door,
And with the snow-gust from the darkness drear,
A stranger entered, whose large garments bore
Proof of the storm in clinging snowflakes hoar.

XX.

Aged he seemed, and staff of length had he,
Which well would holy pilgrim have become,
But yet he sought, with quiet dignity
And easy step, the centre of the room;
Then by the glimmering light our Sire could see
His flowing beard, white as the lily's bloom;
Age had his temples scored; but, — glancing free,
As from the imprint of a century,

XXI.

His eyes beamed youth; and such a solemn mien,
Joined with such majesty and graceful air,
Our Founder thought he ne'er before had seen
In mortal form; and at the offered chair
The stranger gently shook his brow serene,
And by the act revealed his long white hair,
As fell the fleecy covering from it clean,
Where down his shoulder hung its tresses sheen.

XXII.

And when he spake his voice was low and clear,
But yet so deeply thrilling in its tone,
The listening soul seemed rapt into a sphere
Where angels speak in music of their own.
"Williams," it said, "I come on message here,
Of mighty moment to this age unknown,
Thou must not dally, or the tempest fear,
But fly at morn into the forest drear.

XXIII.

"Thou art to voyage an unexploréd flood;
No chart is there thy lonely bark to steer;
Beneath her, rocks — around her, tempests rude,
And persecution's billows in her rear,
Shall shake thy soul till it is near subdued:
But when the welcome of 'What cheer! What cheer!'
Shall greet thine ears from Indian multitude,
Cast thou thine *Anchor* there, and *trust in God*."

XXIV.

The stranger ceased, and gently past away,
Though Williams to retain him still was fain;
"The night was dark, and wild the tempest's sway,
And lone the desert," but 'twas all in vain;

He only in soft accents seemed to say,
"Perchance I may behold thee yet again,
What time thy day shall more auspicious be,
And hope shall turn to joy in victory."

XXV.

The stranger past, and Williams, by the fire,
Long mused on this mysterious event:
Was it some seraph, robed in man's attire,
Come down to urge and hallow his intent? —
To counsel — kindle — and his breast inspire
With words of high prophetic sentiment?
Or had he dreamed and in his mind, as clear
As if in corporal presence, seen the seer?

XXVI.

'Twas strange — mysterious! Yet, if dream it were,
'Twas such as chosen men of old had known,
When Jacob saw the heaven-ascending stair,
And Joseph hoarded for the dearth foreshown.
Ah! did the Omniscient hear his earnest prayer,
And did e'en Heaven the glorious project own!
Then would he, by the morrow's earliest ray,
Unto the distant forest make his way.

XXVII.

He sought for rest, but feverous was his plight
For peaceful and refreshing sleep, I trow;
Still mused he on the morrow's toilsome flight,
Through unknown wilds and trackless wastes of snow;
How to elude the persecutor's sight,
Or shun the eager quest of following foe,
Tasked his invention with no labor light —
And long, and slow, and lagging was the night.

XXVIII.

And if by fits came intervening sleep,
Through deserts wild and rugged roved his soul,
Here rose the rock — there sunk the headlong steep,
And fiercely round him seemed the storm to howl;
The while from sheltered glen his foes would peep
With taunts and jeers, and with revilings foul
Scoff at his efforts; and their clamors deep
Came mingled with that awful tempest's sweep.

XXIX.

Morn came at last; and by the dawning day,
Our Founder rose his secret flight to take;
His wife and infant still in slumber lay; —
And shall he now that blissful slumber break?
Oh, yes, for he believes that trials may,
Within the mind, its mightier powers awake,
And that the storms, which gloom the pilgrim's way,
Prepare the soul for her eternal day.

XXX.

"Mary!" (she woke) "prepare the meet attire,
My pocket-compass and my mantle strong,
My flint and steel to yield the needful fire,
Food for a week, if that be not too long;
My hatchet, too — its service I require
To clip my fuel desert wilds among;
With these I go to found, in forests drear,
A State where none shall persecution fear."

XXXI.

"What! goest thou, Roger, in this chilling storm?
Wait! wait at least until its rage is o'er;
Its wrath will bar e'en persecution's arm
From thee and me until it fails to roar.

Oh, what protecting hand from lurking harm
Will be thy shield by night? — What friendly door
Will give thee refuge at the dire alarm
Of hungry wolves, and beasts in human form?"

XXXII.

"Oh cease, my Mary, cease! — Thou dost complain
That Heaven itself doth interpose to save, —
Doth wing this tempest's fury to restrain
The quest of foes, and prompt my soul to brave
The desert's perils, that I may maintain
The conscience free against who would enslave; —
Wait till the storm shall cease to sweep the plain,
And we are doomed to cross yon heaving main."

XXXIII.

No more he said, for she in silence went
From place to place until her task was o'er;
Williams, the while, the fleeting moments spent
To scrawl a message to delay the more —
Aye, to mislead the beagles on the scent,
Till he could safely reach far wood or shore;
And, haply, hope its vain illusion lent
That friends might plead, and bigotry relent.

XXXIV.

Then he to Heaven his weeping spouse commends,
And craves its blessing on his purpose bold; —
Still Salem lies in sleep, and forth he wends
To breast the driving storm and chilling cold;
While the lone mother from the window sends
A look where all her aching heart is told;
Dimly she marks him as his course he bends
Across the fields, and toward the forest tends.

XXXV.

To show him parting, to the light she rears
His child, yet ignorant of human woe;
And soon its guileless silver voice she hears,
"O! where is father going in the snow?"
The tender accents start the mother's tears,
"He does, my child, to barbarous red men go,
To seek protection from hard brethren here
For thee and me, and all to him that's dear."

XXXVI.

So forth he ventured; — even like the dove
That earliest from the window of the ark,
Went forth on venturous wings, to soar above
The world of waters heaving wild and dark
O'er sunken realms of death, the while she strove
Some high emergent mountain peak to mark,
Where she might rest, beyond the billow's sweep,
And build herself a home amid the deep.

XXXVII.

The boundless forests now our Founder trod,
And due southwestwardly his course he took;
The lofty pines and cedars round him nod, —
Loud roars the tempest through the leafless oak;
The snow lies deep upon the frozen sod,
And still the storm's descending torrents choke
The heavens above; and only fancy could, —
So dim the view, — conceive the solitude

XXXVIII.

Of the wide forests that before him lay:
His ever steady onward pace alone
Told that from home he lengthened yet his way,
While the same forms — the same drear hollow moan,

Seemed ever round him lingering to stay,
And every step of progress to disown ;
As with all sail the bark may breast the tide,
Nor yet advance, but rather backward glide.

XXXIX.

Above his head the branches writhe and bend,
Or in the mingled wreck their ruin flies ;
The storm redoubles, and the whirlwinds blend
The rising snow-drift with descending skies :
And oft the crags a friendly shelter lend
His breathless bosom, and his sightless eyes ;
But, when the transient gust its fury spends,
Amid the storm again his way he wends.

XL.

Still truly does his course the magnet keep —
No toils fatigue him, and no fears appal ;
Oft turns he at the glimpse of swampy deep,
Or thicket dense, or crag abrupt and tall,
Or backward treads to shun the headlong steep,
Or pass above the tumbling waterfall ;
Yet still rejoices when the torrent's leap,
Or crag abrupt, or thicket dense, or swamp's far sweep

XLI.

Assures him progress. — From gray morn till noon —
Hour after hour — from that drear noon until
The evening's gathering darkness had begun
To clothe with deeper glooms the vale and hill,
Sire Williams journeyed in the forest lone ;
And then night's thickening shades began to fill
His soul with doubt — for shelter he had none —
And all the outstretched waste was clad with one

XLII.

Vast mantle hoar. And he began to hear,
At times, the fox's bark, and the fierce howl
Of wolf, sometimes afar — sometimes so near,
That in the very glen they seemed to prowl
Where now he, wearied, paused — and then his ear
Started to note some shaggy monster's growl,
That from his snow-clad rocky den did peer,
Shrunk with gaunt famine in that tempest drear,

XLIII.

And scenting human blood:— yea, and so nigh,
Thrice did our northern tiger seem to come,
He thought he heard the fagots crackling by,
And saw, through driven snow and twilight gloom,
Peer from the thickets his fierce burning eye,
Scanning his destined prey, and through the broom,
Thrice stealing on his ears, the whining cry
Swelled by degrees above the tempest high.

XLIV.

Wayworn he stood — and fast that stormy night
Was gathering round him over hill and dale;
He looked around and by the lingering light,
Found he had paused within a narrow vale;
On either hand a snow-clad rocky height
Ascended high, a shelter from the gale,
Whilst deep between them, in thick glooms bedight,
A swampy dingle lay before his sight.

XLV.

Through the white billows thither did he wade,
And deep within its solemn bosom trod;
Then on the snow with oft repeated tread
Hardened a flooring for his night's abode; —

All there was calm, for the thick branches made
A screen above, and round him closely stood
The trunks of cedars and of pines arrayed,—
To the rude tempest a firm barricade.

XLVI.

And now his hatchet, with resounding stroke,
Hewed down the boscage that around him rose,
And of dry pine the brittle branches broke,
To yield him fuel for the night's repose:
The gathered heap an ample store bespoke;
He smites the steel—the tinder brightly glows;
Fired by the match forth burst the kindling flame,
And light upon night's seated darkness came.

XLVII.

High branched the pines, and far the colonnade
Of tapering trunks stood glimmering through the glen;
And then rejoiced he in that lonely glade
So far away from persecuting men,
That he might break of honesty the bread,
And blessing crave in his own way again;—
Of up-piled brush a seat and board he made,
Spread his plain fare, and piously he prayed.

XLVIII.

"Father of mercies! thou the wanderer's guide
In this dire storm along the howling waste,
Thanks for the shelter thou dost here provide,
Thanks for the mercies of the day that's past;
Thanks for the frugal fare thou hast supplied;
And O! may still thy tender mercies last;
And may thy light on every falsehood shine,
Till man's freed spirit owns no law but thine!"

XLIX.

Our father ceased, and with keen relish he
Refreshed his wearied frame in that lone dell;
Ah! little can his far posterity
Conceive the pleasures of that frugal meal;
For naught he knew of lavish luxury,
And toil and fast had done their office well;
No costliest viands culled from land and sea
Could half so sweet to pampered palates be.

L.

His hunger sated with his simple fare,
He would, in weariness, have sought repose;
But at the kindling blaze, heard wide and far,
The howlings drear of forest monsters rose;
And, lured around him by the vivid glare,
Came darkling with light foot along the snows
Whole packs of wolves, from their far mountain lair,
And the fierce cat, which scarce the blaze might scare.

LI.

Growling they come, and in dark groups they stand,
Show the white fang, and roll the brightening eye;
Till urged by famine's rage, the shaggy band
Seemed even the flame's bright terrors to defy;
Then mid the group he hurled the blazing brand;
Swift they disperse, and raise the scattered cry;
But, rallying soon, back to the siege they came,
And in their rage scarce faltered at the flame.

LII.

Yet Williams deemed that persecution took
A form in them less odious than in men;
He on their proper solitude had broke, —
Ay, and had trespassed on their native glen;

His human shape they scantly too might brook,
For it their enemy had ever been;
But bigot man to probe the conscience sought,
And scathed his brother for his secret thought.

LIII.

Oft he recruited now the sinking blaze —
His stock of fuel seemed too scant to last;
Yet, in the terror of the glittering rays,
Was now the anchor of his safety cast;
With utmost reach the boscage did he raze,
Or clipt the branches overhead that past;
And still the burning pyre at times would raise,
Or hurl the firebrand at the monster's gaze.

LIV.

At length the groups a panic seemed to seize,
And soon he knew the terrifying cause;
For swelling slow beneath the arching trees,
Trilled the long whine the dreadful panther draws;
A sound that might the boldest bosom freeze;
'Twas followed by a drear and awful pause;
Naught marred the silence save the murmuring breeze,
And the far storm, like roar of distant seas.

LV.

Of all the dangerous monsters of the wood,
None did the hunter dread like panther dire,
For man and beast he fearlessly pursued; —
Whilst others shunned, he was allured by fire;
And Williams knew how perilous his mood,
And braced his nerves to battle with his ire;
Beside the rising blaze he firmly stood,
And every avenue of danger viewed.

LVI.

In God he trusted for deliverance, —
He thought of Daniel in the lion's den;
He waited silent for the fierce advance, —
He heard the fagots break along the glen;
Another long-drawn yell, and the fierce glance
Of two bright burning eye-balls, looking then
Out of the darkness, did yet more enhance
The terrors of the menacing mischance.

LVII.

But at this moment from the darkness broke
A human voice, in Narraganset's tongue;
"Neemat!" (my brother) in kind tone it spoke,
"How comes Awanux these drear wilds among?"
And at the accents the dark thickets shook,
And from them lightly the red hunter sprung,
And from his belt familiarly he took
And fired his calumet, and curled its smoke.

LVIII.

Then to our Founder passed the simple cheer,
In sign of friendship to a wandering man,
"Let not," he said, "my brother quake with fear,
'Twas *Waban's* cry at which the monsters ran."
Williams received the pledge of faith sincere;
Yet warily his guest began to scan.
Tall did his straight and active form appear,
And armed but with the hunter's simple gear.

LIX.

The bear's dark fur loose o'er his shoulders cast,
His hand did only at the breast confine,
The wampum wreath, which round his forehead past,
Did with the flame's reflected brightness shine;

The beaver's girdle closely swathed his waist;
It's skirts hung low, all trimm'd with 'broidery fine;
The well-formed ankles the close gaiters bound,
With furs befringed, and starred with tinsel round.

LX.

Nature's kind feelings did his visage grace;
His gently arching brow was shorn all bare,
And the slight smile now fading from his face,
The aspect left of serious goodness there;
Though bright his eyes beneath his forehead's base,
They rather seemed to smile than fiercely glare;
And the free dignity of Waban's race
Seemed moving in his limbs and breathing from his face.

LXI.

Williams the pledge of friendship now returned,
And thanks o'erflowing to the hunter gave:
"From the Great Spirit sure my brother learned
His brother's danger, when he came to save."
"Waban," he answered, "from his lodge discerned
A stranger's fire, and heard the monsters rave.
Waban has long within these wilds sojourned;
But ne'er before has pale Awanux burned

LXII.

"His fire within this unfrequented glade.
Wanders my brother from his homeward way?
The storm is thick, he surely may have strayed;
Or has he hunted through the weary day
The rapid moose; or in this lonely shade
Seeks he to trap the deer, or make essay
To catch the wily beavers, who have made
Their cunning wigwams in the river's bed?"

LXIII.

"'Twere hard to tell my brother of the woods
What cause has forced his pale-faced brother here,
The red and white men have their different moods,
And Narraganset's tongue lacks terms, I fear,
To tell the strifes among white multitudes —
Strifes yet unknown within these forests drear,
Where undisturbed ye worship various gods,
And persecution leave to white abodes.

LXIV.

"Let it suffice, (for weary is the night,)
That late across the mighty lake I came,
Seeking protection here of brethren white,
From those pale chiefs who had, with scourge and [flame,
Driven them as me o'er sea in dangerous flight; —
Our wrongs, as our offenses, were the same:
God we had worshipped as to us seemed right,
And roused the vengeance of our men of might.

LXV.

"My brethren then had persecution fled,
And much I hoped with them a home to find;
But to our common God whene'er we prayed,
My honest worship did not suit their mind;
It differed greatly from their own, they said;
Their anger kindled, and, with speech unkind,
They drove me from my family and home,
An exile in this dreadful storm to roam.

LXVI.

"And now, my brother, through the wilds I go,
To seek some far—some lone sequestered glen—
Where burning fagot nevermore shall glow,
Fired by the wrath of persecuting men;

Where all may worship, as their gods they know,
Or conscience lights and leads their varying ken ; —
Where ages after ages still may bow,
And from free hearts free orisons may flow."

LXVII.

Waban a while mused on our Founder's tale,
And silent sate in meditative mood ;
For much he wondered why his brothers pale
For differing worship sought their kindred's blood.
At last he thought that they must surely fail
To know the Great Spirit as a father good,
Or Chepian* was their god, and had inclined
Them to indulge a fell and cruel mind.

LXVIII.

Then pity blended with his wonder grew ;
Here was a victim of that Evil One,
Who from him and his angry servants flew
To seek a shelter in the forest lone.
" Brother," he said, " thy brother much doth rue
(Hearing thy tales,) that thou art forced to shun
Thy well-framed wigwam — thy familiar fire,
And sleep so far amid this tempest dire.

LXIX.

" Now, brother, hear, what Waban has to say :
The night is cold, and fast the snows descend ;
Still round thy sleep will howl the beasts of prey ; —
Will not my brother to my wigwam wend ?
It smokes well-sheltered and not far away ;
There may my brother this drear season spend,
And shun the wrath of Chepian's angry men,
Until Sowaniu's breezes scatter flowers again.

* The name of the Indian devil.

LXX.

"Right weleome to the red man's lodge shall be
His pale-faced brother, safe from Sachems pale;
Waban's nausamp and venison shall be free
When hunger craves, and, when his store shall fail,
His dart is true, and swift and far will he
Pursue the bounding deer o'er hill and dale;—
When melts the snow we may together raise,
On Seekonk's banks, our common field of maize."

LXXI.

Williams replied, "My brother sure is kind,
But his red friends are doubtless with him here;
And they may teach my kindred, left behind,
To track my footsteps through the forest drear;—
To journey homeward I have little mind;
My course is with the sun to wilds less near,
Where I would form, if granted the domain,
A tribe which never should the soul enchain."

LXXII.

"Alone is Waban," was the sad reply;
"His wife and child have to that country gone
Where go our spirits when our bodies die,
And left thy brother in his lodge alone:
He goes by day to catch the beavers shy,
And sits by night in his still house to moan,
And much 'twould please him should the wanderer come,
And tell him where the loved ones' spirits roam."

LXXIII.

"Brother, I thank thee—thou art kind indeed,"
Our Founder said—"and with thee I will go;
Would that my brethren of the Christian creed
Did half thy charity and goodness know!

Waban, thou wilt thy brother's purpose speed,
And all the boundaries of those countries show
Which lie adjoining Narraganset's bay,
And name the chiefs, and count the tribes they sway."

LXXIV.

"Waban can do it" — was the quick reply,
And Williams followed him, as fast he led
Through bush and brake with blazing brand held high;
The wolves around them gathered as they sped;
But Waban often raised the mimic cry
Of the fierce panther, and as oft they fled;
Until the path descending swiftly steep,
Led to his wigwam in the valley deep.

LXXV.

Then Williams noted, through the deepest night,
The sparkles rising from the roof unseen,
And, by the glancing of the firebrand's light,
Above him marked the thickening branches' screen;
For denser here, and of a loftier height,
The pines and cedars arched their sombre green,
With boughs deprest beneath the burden hoar;
And further off did seem the tempest's roar.

LXXVI.

An undressed deerskin closed the entrance rude
Of the frail mansion of our Founder's friend;
"Brother," he said, "this is my poor abode,
But thou art welcome — it will well defend
Thee from the bitter tempest," and he showed
The open pass. Beneath its arch they bend:
From mid the room the blazing fagots sent
The smoke and sparkles through the vault's low vent,

LXXVII.

And, shining round, did for the ceiling show
The braided mat of many colors made, --
Veiled here and there, where, hanging in a row,
The beavers' hides their silvery coats displayed;
And here and there were antlers, from the brow
Of bounding buck, around the room arrayed;
And also, hung among the hunter's gear,
The dusky haunches of the moose and deer.

LXXVIII.

Hard-by the blazing hearth, raised from the ground
Three braided pallets stood, with furs bespread,
Where once red Waban, wife and child had found
The humble settle, and still humbler bed;
But now, alas! beneath the grassy mound,
Two of the three sate with the silent dead;*
The wampum girdle, that his spouse once wore,
Gleamed on her garb of furs the settle o'er.

LXXIX.

The room was warm, and plenteous the cheer
Which Waban then did to our Founder bring;
In trays the nocake,† and the joints of deer,
And in the gourd-shell water from the spring;
And, all the while, kept pouring in his ear
How he had pierced the wild duck on the wing;
And westward lately had the moose pursued
Afar, and struck him in Mooshausick's wood.

LXXX.

Slightly our Founder tasted of the fare,
For toil and chill much more than hunger prest;
This Waban noted, and with tender care,
The vacant pallet showed, and urged him rest;

* The Indians bury their dead in a sitting posture.
† A corruption of the Indian Nokehick—parched meal.

Waban he said, would still the fire repair,
And still in comfort keep his pale-faced guest,
" And may the Manittoo of dreams," he said,
" The happiest visions on thy slumbers shed.

LXXXI.

" Upon this pallet she was wont to lay
Herself to sleep whose spirit now is gone;
And may that spirit to thy visions say
Where now she dwells, and where my little son;
Whether on that blest island far away,
O'er the blue hills beyond the setting sun,
They with their kindred joy, or nearer home,
Still lingering, wait until the father come."

LXXXII.

Williams replied, that he would speak at morn
Of that far journey which the spirit takes;
And name the Guide, who never soul forlorn,
Whilst passing through death's gloomy night, forsakes.
His brother, then, on fitting day in turn,
Would name the bounds, by rivers, bays, and lakes,
Of neighboring chiefs, and say what Sachems might
His mission threaten, or its hopes invite.

LXXXIII.

Our Founder slept; and on that night, I ween,
Deep was the slumber of that pallet low,
Calm were its dreams as was his breast serene —
Such sleep can persecutors never know;
He slept, until the dawning light was seen
Down through the dome to shine upon his brow;
Then Waban woke him to his simple cheer
Of the pure fount, nausamp,* and savory deer.

* The word *samp* is a corruption of the Indian *nausamp*, and has the same meaning.

CANTO SECOND.

[Scenes. The Wigwam — The Wilderness — Pawtucket Falls — Seekonk's Meads — The Wigwam.

It was the morning of a Sabbath day,
When Williams rose to Waban's simple cheer,
But knew not where, save that vast forests lay
Betwixt his home and the lone wigwam here;
Yet 'twas a place of peace; no thing of clay,
'Twixt God and conscience in communion near,
Came, with profane and impious control,
To check the heavenward wanderings of his soul.

II.

God loves the wilderness; in deserts lone,
Where all is silent, where no living thing
Mars the hushed solitudes, where Heaven looks down,
And Earth looks up, each as if marvelling
That aught should be; and, through the vast unknown,
Thought-breathing silence seems as uttering
The present God, — there does He rear his throne,
And, tranced in boundless thoughts, the soul doth own

III.

And feel his strength within.—This day once more,
In place thus sacred, did our Founder keep;
None, save the Deity he bent before,
Marked the devotions of his feelings deep.
None, do I say? yet there was Waban poor;
Alas! his mind in utter night did sleep;
He saw our Founder at his earnest prayer,
But knew not what his supplications were.

IV.

Yet earnestly the pious man besought,
That Heaven would deign to shed the Gospel light
On the kind pagan's soul, as yet untaught
Save in the dreams of her primordial night;
And much he prayed, that to the truth when brought,—
Cleansed of his sins in garments pure and white,—
He might subdue the fierceness of his clan,
And gain man refuge from intolerant man.

V.

Williams the task of goodness now essayed,
To win the wanderer to a worship new;
The utter darkness that his soul arrayed,
Concealed her workings from our Founder's view,
Save when some question, rare and strange, betrayed
His dream-bewildered glimpses of the true.—
Long was the task; and Williams back began,
At earth's creation and the fall of man.

VI.

He told how God from nothing formed the earth,
And gave each creature shape surpassing fair;
How He in Eden, at their happy birth,
Placed with His blessing the first human pair;
How, disobeying, they were driven forth,
And they, and theirs, consigned to sad despair,
Until, incarnate, God in pity gave
Himself for man, and made it just to save.

VII.

He then told how the blessed martyrs bore
The chains of dungeons, and the fagot's flame,
Glad that their sufferings might attest the more
Their perfect faith in their Redeemer's name;

How His disciples past from shore to shore,
Salvation's joyful tidings to proclaim ;
How hither now they brought the Gospel's light
To cheer the red men wrapt in pagan night.

VIII.

Waban attentive listened to the strain,
And at its close for long in silence sate ;
His visage did a graver cast attain
And all his heart's deep feelings indicate.
At length he uttered thus the mental train :—
" Weak is my soul, and dark is her estate !
No book has she to tell of Manit high,
Except this outstretched earth and starry sky.

IX.

" Great news Awanux brings the red men here —
News that their legends old doth much excel ;
Yet give to Waban the attentive ear,
And the traditions of his sires he'll tell.
From days afar, down many a rolling year —
Down to thy brothers red — their fathers' tale
Comes to inform them, in their mortal state,
What powers they should revere — what deprecate."

X.

Here Waban paused, and sitting mused a space,
As pondering gravely on the mighty theme ;
Deep thought was graven on his earnest face,
And still his groping memory did seem
To gather up the legends of his race.
At length he roused, as from a passing dream,
And from his mat, majestically slow
Rearing his form, began in accents low :

XI.

"Brother, that time is distant — far away,
When Heaven or Earth or living thing was not,
Save our great God, Cawtantowit, who lay
Extended through immensity, where naught
But shoreless waters were—and dead were they;
No living thing did on their bosom float,
And silentness the boundless space did fill;
For the Great Spirit slept—and all was still.

XII.

"But though he slept, yet, as the human soul
To this small frame, his being did pervade
The universal space, and ruled the whole;
E'en as the soul, when in deep slumber laid,
Doth her wild dreams and fantasies control,
And give them action, color, shape and shade
Just as she wills. But the Great Spirit broke
His sleep at last, and all the boundless shook.

XIII.

"In a vast eagle's form embodied, He
Did o'er the deep on outstretched pinions spring;
Fire in his eye lit all immensity,
Whilst his majestically gliding wing
Trembled hoarse thunders to the shuddering sea;
And, through their utmost limit quivering,
The conscious waters felt their Manittoo,
And life, at once, their deepest regions knew.

XIV.

"The moutain whale came spouting from below,
The porpoise plunged along the foaming main,
The smaller fry in sporting myriads go,
With glancing backs above the liquid plain;

Yet still refused her giant form to show —
Ay, sullenly below did yet remain
Earth-bearing Tortoise, the *Unamis* vast,
And o'er her still the loftly billows past.

XV.

" Then great Cawtantowit in his anger spoke,
And from his flaming eyes the lightnings past,
And from his wings the tenfold thunders broke.
The sullen Tortoise heard his words at last —
And slowly she her rocky grasp forsook,
And her huge back of woods and mountains vast
From the far depths tow'rd upper light began
Slowly to heave.—The affrighted waters ran

XVI.

" Hither and thither, tumultous and far;
But still Unamis, heaving from below
The full formed earth, first, through the waves did rear
The fast sky-climbing Alleghany's brow,
Dark, huge and craggy; from its summits bare
The rolling billows fell, and rising now,
All its broad forest to the breezy air
Came out of Ocean, and, from verdure fair,

XVII.

" Shed the salt showers. Far o'er the deep,
Hills after hills still lift their clustered trees,
Wild down the rising slopes the waters leap,
Then from the up-surging plain the ocean flees,
Till lifted from the flood, in vale and steep
And rock, and forest waving to the breeze,
Earth, on the Tortoise borne, frowned ocean o'er,
And spurned the billows from her thundering shore.

XVIII.

" But great Cawtantowit, on his pinions still,
O'er the lone earth majestically sprung,
And whispered to the mountain, vale and hill,
And with new life the teeming regions rung ;
The feathered songsters tune their carols shrill,
Herds upon herds the plain and mountain throng ;
In the still pools the cunning beavers toil,
And the armed seseks* their strong folds uncoil.

XIX.

" Yet man was not.—Then great Cawtantowit spoke
To the hard mountain crags and called for man :
And sculptured, breathing, from the cleaving rock,
Sprang the armed warrior, and a strife began
With living things.—Hard as his native block,
Was his stone heart, and through it ran
Blood cold as ice — and the Great Spirit struck
This cruel man, and him to atoms broke.

XX.

" Then He the oak, of fibre hard and fine,
With the first red man's soul and form endowed,
And woman made he of the tapering pine,
Which 'neath that oak in peaceful beauty bowed ;
She on the red man's bosom did recline,
Like the bright rainbow on the thunder-cloud.
And the Great Spirit saw his work divine,
And on the pair let fall His smile benign.

XXI.

" He gave them all these forests far and near,
The forms that fly, and those that creeping go,
The healthful fountains, and the rivers clear,
And all the broods that sport the waves below ;

* Sesek—rattlesnake.

Then gave he man the swiftness of the deer,
And armed his hands with arrows and the bow,
And bade him shelter still his consort dear,
And tread his large domain without a peer.

XXII.

" Then did he send Yotaanit on high,
(For Gods he fashioned as he formed the land,)
And bade him star with fires the azure sky,
And kindle the round blaze of Keesuckquand ;
And then, to cheer by night the hunter's eye,
Bright Nanapaushat sprung from Wamponand ;
Thus with his will the manittoos comply,
And every region knows its deity.*

XXIII.

" All things thus were formed from what was good,
And the foul refuse every evil had ;
But it had felt the influence of the God,
(How should it not ?) and a black demon, sad
And stern and cruel, loving strife and blood,
Filled with all malice, and with fury mad,
Sprang into life : — such was fell Chepian's birth,
The hate of gods, and terror of the earth.

XXIV.

" Then to the south-west the Great Spirit flew,
Whence the soft breezes of the summer come,
And from the depths Sowaniu's † island drew,
And bade its fields with lasting verdure bloom.
O'er it he bent another welkin blue,
Which never night nor clouds nor tempests gloom,
And kindled suns the lofty arches through,
And bade them shine with glory ever new.

* See note † Sowaniu — here of three syllables — was written by Williams, " Sowwainiu."

XXV.

"When thus Cawtantowit had finished all,
No more did he on eagle's pinions roam,
There did he limits to his works install,
And centre there his everlasting home;
There did he cast the eagle and recall
His pristine shape, and manit-man become;
There still he dwells, the all-pervading soul
Of men and manittoos — yea, of creation's whole.

XXVI.

"All that is good does from Cawtantowit flow;
All that is evil Chepian doth supply;
Praying for good we to Cawtantowit bow,
And shunning evil we to Chepian cry;
To other manittoos we offerings owe,
Dwell they in mountain, flood, or lofty sky;
And oft they aid us when we hunting go,
Or in fierce battle rush upon the foe.

XXVII.

"And manittoos, that never death shall fear,
Do likewise in this mortal form abide;
What else, my brother, is there beating here?
What heaves this breast — what rolls its crimson tide?
Whilst, like Cawtantowit, doth the soul appear
To live through all and over all preside;
And when her mortal mansion here decays,
She to Sowaniu's blessed island strays,

XXVIII.

"There aye to joy; if, whilst she dwelt with men,
She wisely counseled and did bravely fight,
Or watchful caught the beavers in the glen,
Or nimbly followed far the moose's flight;

But if a sluggard and a coward, then
To rove all wretched in the glooms of night,
Misled by Chepian, a poor wandering ghost, —
In swamps and fens and bogs and brambles lost.

XXIX.

"And now, my brother, rightly worship we,
When to Cawtantowit we make our prayer?
Or when for help to Chepian we flee,
And pray that us from every harm he spare?
For every harm is all his own, we see,
And good Cawtantowit has ne'er a share —
Then why should not I Chepian sue to be
Much sparing of his harm to mine and me?"

XXX.

Williams made answer, "When red warriors brave
The fight's dark tempest and for glory die,
Does Waban tremble whilst the battles rave,
And at the hurtling arrows wink his eye?
Or, basely cowering, does he mercy crave
Of the red hatchet o'er him lifted high?
Who prays to Chepian is a cringing slave,
And, dying, fills at last a coward's grave."

XXXI.

Strongly these words to Waban's pride appealed;
Yet back upon him did the memory rush
Of by-gone ages, and of many a field
Where fought his fathers, who with victory flush,
Not to Cawtantowit, but to Chepian kneeled,
And thanked his aid.—They cowards! and the blush,
That in their worship fear should seem revealed,
Was scantly by his tawny hue concealed.

XXXII.

At last he said, "My brother doubtless knows —
He has a book which his Great Spirit wrote:
Brave were my fathers, yet did they repose
With hope in Chepian, and his aid besought
When forth they marched to shed the blood of foes;
But maybe they, like Waban, never thought
That they were cowards, when they fiercely prayed
That Evil One to give their vengeance aid.

XXXIII.

"Waban will think, and should it seem like fear —
Waban ne'er shrunk when round him battle roared,
And at the stake when bound, his torturers near,
Among the clouds thy brother's spirit soared
And scorned her foes — but should it seem like fear
To worship Chepian, whom his sires adored,
He will no more be that dread demon's slave;
For ne'er will Waban fill a coward's grave."

XXXIV.

Thus in grave converse did they pass the day,
Till night returning brought them slumbers sweet;
And, with the morrow, shone the sun's broad ray
Serenely down on Waban's lone retreat.
Then Williams might have journeyed on his way,
But doubt and darkness still restrained his feet;
And so with Waban made he further stay
To learn about the tribes that round him lay.

XXXV.

Hence may he secretly to Salem write,
And friends approving, still his plans arrange;
For Waban soon will bear his peltry light
To Salem's mart, and there may interchange

The mute epistles, meant for friendly sight, —
Unseen of eyes inimical or strange,
Lest rumor of them reach the bigot's ear,
And persecution find him even here.

XXXVI.

Among the several tribes around to go,
And sound the feelings of each different clan,
Seemed not unmeet; but little did he know
How they might treat a pale-faced outlawed man,
Friendless and homeless, wandering to and fro,
And flying from his own white brethren's ban;
They, for a price, might strike the fatal blow,
Or bear him captive to his ruthless foe.

XXXVII.

Better it were, so deemed our Father well,
To seek and win the savage by degrees,
Since to his lot the dangerous duty fell,
(For such did seem high Heaven's all-wise decrees),
To found unarmed a State where rung the yell
Of barbarous nations on the midnight breeze;
Against the scalping-knife with no defence
Or safeguard but his heart's benevolence.

XXXVIII.

With only this, his buckler and his brand —
This, yet unproved and doubted by the best, —
In cheerless wilds, mid many a savage band,
Spurned from his home, by Christian men opprest,
Must he the warrior's weapon turn, his hand
Unnerve, and gently o'er his rugged breast
Gain mastery. The panther by the hare
Must be approached and softened in his lair.

XXXIX.

That night, returnlng from the accustomed pool,
Came Waban laden with the beavers' spoils,
And joy seemed dancing in his very soul
As he displayed the produce of his toils;
Much he rejoiced, and Williams heard the whole, —
How long he watched, how many were his foils;
Then how the cunning beasts were captured all,
As through the fractured ice they sought to crawl.

XL.

"Bravely," said Williams, "has my brother done,
No more the cunning wights will mock his skill.
Waban is rich; will he not hie him soon
To the pale wigwams, and his girdle fill
With the bright wampum? — Ere to-morrow's sun
Shall hide behind the crest of yonder hill,
Waban may gain the pale-faced stranger's town,
And in his brother's wigwam sit him down."

XLI.

"The hunter goes," said Waban in reply;
Then fired his calumet and curled its smoke,
And silent sate in all the dignity
Which conscious worth can give the human look.
But when the fragrant clouds to mount on high
Had ceased, he from the bowl the embers shook,
And spread on earth the brown deer's rustling hide,
Expanding to the eye its naked side.

XLII.

Then thus he spake: "My brother doth require
Waban to show where neighboring Sachems reign; —
Doubtless he seeks to light his council fire
Within some good and valiant chief's domain,

That he may shun the persecutor's ire,
And pray his God without the fear of men.
On Waban's words my brother may repose,
Whilst these far feet imprint the distant snows."

XLIII.

Then from the hearth a quenchéd brand he took,
And on the skin traced many a curving line;
Here rolled the river, there the winding brook,
Here rose the hills, and there the vales decline,
Here spreads the bay, and there the ocean broke,
Along red Waban's map of rude design.
The work now finished, he to Williams spoke,
"Here, brother, on the red man's country look.

XLIV.

"Here's Waban's lodge, thou seest it smokes between
Dark rolling Seekonk and Cohannet's wave;*
Both floods on-flowing through their borders green,
In Narraganset's basin find their grave.
O'er all the country 'twixt those waters sheen
Reigns Massasoit, Sachem good and brave;
Yet he has subject Keenomps far and near,
Who bring him tribute of the slaughtered deer,

XLV.

"And bend his battle bow. — Strong is he now,
But has been stronger. Ere dark pestilence
Devoured his warriors — laid his hundreds low, —
That Sachem's war-whoop roused to his defence
Three thousand bow-men; and he still can show
A mighty force, whene'er the kindling sense
Of common wrong does in the bosom glow,
And prompts to battle with the offending foe.

* Cohannet, the Indian name for Taunton, is here applied to the river.

XLVI.

"His highest chief is Corbitant the stern;
He bears a fox's head and panther's heart,
He 'gainst Awanux does in secret turn,
Sharps his keen knife, and points his thirsty dart;
His council fires in Mattapoiset* burn,
Of Pokanoket's woods his licensed part.
Cruel he is, and terrible his train —
Light not your fires within that wolf's domain.

XLVII.

"Here, tow'rd the winter, where the fountains feed
These rolling rivers, do the Nipnets dwell;
They Massasoit bring the skin and bead,
And rush to war when rings his battle yell;
Valiant are they, yet oft their children bleed,
When the far West sends down her Maquas fell;
Warriors who hungry on their victims steal,
And make of human flesh a dreadful meal.

XLVIII.

"Here lies Namasket tow'rd the rising sun;
There Massasoit spends his seasons cold;
The warriors there are led by Annawan,
Of open hand and of a bosom bold;
Here farther down, Cohannet's banks upon,
Spreads broad Pocasset, strong Apannow's hold;
The bowmen there tread Massasoit's land,
E'en to Seconnet's billow-beaten strand.

XLIX.

"Still tow'rd the rising sun might Waban show
And count each tribe, and each brave Keenomp name;
But then his brother does not wish to go
Nearer the pale-face and the fagot's flame;

* Mattapoiset, now Swansey.

But rather tow'rd the tomahawk and bow,
And would the friendship of the red man claim:
Therefore will Waban, on the western shores,
Count Narraganset's men and sagamores.

L.

"Two mighty chiefs — one cautious, wise and old,
One young and strong, and terrible in fight —
All Narraganset and Coweset hold;
One lodge they build, one council fire they light;
One sways in peace, and one in battle bold;
Five thousand warriors give their arrows flight;
This is Miantonomi, strong and brave,
And that Canonicus, his uncle grave.*

LI.

"Dark rolling Seekonk does their realm divide
From Pokanoket, Massasoit's reign;
Thence sweeping down the bay, their forests wide
Spread their dark foliage to the billowy main;
Thence tow'rd the setting sun by ocean's side,
Stretches their realm to where the rebel train,
Ruled by grim Uncas, with their hatchets dyed
In brother's blood, on Pequot stream abide.†

LII.

"Canonicus is as the beaver wise,
Miantonomi as the panther bold;
But tow'rd the faces pale their watchful eyes
Are oft in awful thinking silence rolled;
And often in their heaving bosoms rise
Thoughts that to none but Keenomps they have told;
They seem two buffaloes the herds that lead,
Scenting the hunters gathering round their mead.

* See note. † See note.

LIII.

" When first his fire Awanux kindled here,
Haup's* chief was weak, and broken was his heart;
Disease had swept his warriors far and near,
And at his breast looked Narraganset's dart;
Awanux gave him strength, and with strange fear
Did M'antonomi at the big guns start;
He dropt his hatchet; but his hate remains,
And only counsel wise his wrath restrains.

LIV.

" He sees the strangers spreading far around,
And earth turn pale as fast their numbers grow,
And fiercely would he to the battle bound,
And for his country strike the deadly blow,
But that behind the Pequot's yells resound,
And on his left the Nipnet bends the bow;
And even thus his hatchet scarcely sleeps, —
It dreams of Haup, and in its slumber leaps.

LV.

" But, brother, still Miantonomi is
A valiant Sachem — yea, and generous too,
And gray Canonicus is just and wise,
His hands are ever to his tongue most true;
If from their lands my brother's smoke should rise,
Whate'er those Sachems promise, they will do;
But Waban still doth not his friend advise
To cross the Seekonk where their country lies.

LVI.

" Brother, attend and hear the reasons why; —
There at Mooshausick dwells a dark pawaw,
Who hates Awanux, doth his God defy,
And Chepian worships with the deepest awe;

* Haup, or Mount Hope, the summer residence of Massasoit.

He'll give my brother's town a cloudy sky,
And to his councils under-sachems draw;
E'en now he whets the Narraganset knife,
Points at our clan, and thirsts for human life.

LVII.

"Safer on Seekonk's hither border may
My brother build, and wake his council blaze;
Clear are the meads — the trees are swept away
By mighty burnings in our fathers' days.
There early verdure spring and flow'rets gay,
Long grows the grass, and thrifty is the maize;
And good old Massasoit's sheltering wing
Will shield thy weakness from each harmful thing."

LVIII.

"Brother, I thank thee," said our Founder here,
"Oft have I seen thy chief on Plymouth's shore;
I will to-morrow seek those meadows clear,
And thy fair Seekonk's hither banks explore.
But will not Waban pass Namasket near,
Where oft that wise and good old Sagamore,
Brave Massasoit, spends the season drear?"
"He will, my brother" — "Then let Waban hear:

LIX.

"Tell thou that Sachem, generous and wise,
That Williams lingers in thy cabin low,
That he his children and his country flies,
To shun the anger of a Christian foe;
And that to him his pale friend lifts his eyes,
And asks protection. — Tell him that his woe
Springs from this thought, and from this thought alone,
God can be worshipped but as God is known."

LX.

A pause ensued, and Waban silent sate ;
Yet to himself his lips repeating were ;
At length he answering broke the pause sedate,
"Waban remembers, and the talk will bear."
Then he in silence fired his calumet,
And gave its vapors to the wigwam's air,
Whilst Williams wrote, with stationery rude,
His first epistle from the lonely wood.

LXI.

'Twas on the inner bark stript from the pine,
Our Father penciled this epistle rare ;
Two blazing pine-knots did his torches shine,
Two braided pallets formed his desk and chair ;
He wrote his wife the brief familiar line,
How he had journeyed. and his roof now where ;
And that poor Waban was his host benign,
And bade her cheer and gave him blankets fine.

LXII.

Then bade her send the Indian presents, bought
When first they suffered persecution's thrall, —
The strings of wampum, and the scarlet coat,
The tinseled belt and jeweled coronal ;
The pocket Bible, which his haste forgot,
For he had cheering hopes of Waban's soul ;
Then gave her solace to the bad unknown,
That God o'errules and still protects his own.

LXIII.

And to the hunter Williams now presents
The secret charge, with all directions meet ;
For Waban means to take his journey hence
Ere dawns the day upon his lone retreat ;

And then once more did sleep our Founder's sense
And knowledge steal away till morn complete;
When he awoke and found his host was gone,
The lodge all silent, and himself alone.

LXIV.

His fast he broke with the accustomed prayer,
And trimmed him for his walk to Seekonk's side;
Calm was the morn, and pure the winter air,
As from the wigwam forth our Founder hied;
So tall the pines — so thick the branches were, [espied;
That, through their screens, the heavens were scarce
But melting snows and dripping foliage prove
The South blows warmer in the fields above.

LXV.

Now from the swamp to upland woods he past,
Where leafless boughs branched thinner overhead,
And saw the welkin by no cloud o'ercast,
And felt the settled snows give firmer tread.
Now all was calm, no wild and thundering blast [sped;
Mixed earth with heaven, as through the boughs it
And far as eye the boundless forest traced,
Glimmered the snow and stretched the lonely waste.

LXVI.

Onward he went, the magnet still his guide,
And through the wood his course due westward took;
Across his path, with antlers branching wide,
The red deer often from the thicket broke;
The timid partridge, at his rapid stride,
On whirring wings the sheltering bush forsook,
And the wild turkey foot and pinion plied,
Or from her lofty bough uncouthly cried.

LXVII.

At last a sound like murmurs from the shore
Of far-off ocean, when the storm is bound,
Grows on his ear, increasing more and more
As he advances, till the woods resound
And seem to tremble with the constant roar
Of many waters — Ay, the very ground
Beneath him quivers, — and, through arching trees
Bright glimmering and gliding on, he sees

LXVIII.

The river flowing to its dizzy steep
'Twixt fringing forests, from so far as sight
Can track its course, and, rushing, oversweep
The rocky precipice all frothy white,
With noise like thunder in its headlong leap,
And springing sun-bows o'er its showery flight,
And bursting into foam, tumultuous go
Down the deep chasm, to smoke and boil below.

LXIX.

Thence, hurrying onward through the narrow bound
Of banks precipitous, its torrents go,
Till by the jutting cliffs half wheeling round,
They pass from sight among the hills below.
There paused our Father, ravished with the sound
Of the wild waters, and their rapid flow,
And there, alone, rejoiced that he had found
Thy Falls, Pawtucket, and where Seekonk wound.

LXX.

And as he dallied on its margin still,
His restless thought did on the future pause:
Here might his children drive the busy mill,
Here whirl the stones, here clash the riving saws;

But little did he think the torrent's will
Would ever yield so far to human laws,
As from the maid the spindle to receive
And spin for her, and her fair raiment weave.

LXXI.

Reluctantly he left the scene, and fast
Down Seekonk's eastern bank pursued his way,
Seeking for Waban's meads; yet often cast
His glances o'er the river, where the gray
Primeval giants, meet for keel or mast,
Stood, towering and distinct, in proud array;
And wore to his presaging eyes the air
Of lofty ships and stately mansions fair.

LXXII.

Still onward, by the eastern bank he sped;
Here stretched the thicket deep, there swampy fen,
Here sunk the vale, there rose the hillock's head;
Oaks crowned the mound, and cedars gloomed the glen,
Where'er he moved; — at length his footsteps led
Where a bright fountain, sparkling like a gem,
Burst from the caverned cliff, and, glittering, wound
Its copious streamlet, with a murmuring sound,

LXXIII.

Far down the glade; and groves of cedars green,
With woven branches on the winter side,
Repelled the northern storm, whilst clear and sheen,
Crisped by its pebbly bed, the glancing tide
Gleamed in the sun, or darkened where the screen
Of boughs o'erhung its music-murmuring glide; —
It laughed along; — and its broad Southern glade
Was bordered deep by woods of massy shade.

LXXIV.

Charmed with the scene, our sire explored the place,
And penetrated deep the thickets round;
At length his vision opened on a space
Level and broad, and stretching without bound
Southward afar; nor rose o'er all its face
A tree, or shrub, or rock, or swelling mound;
Yet, in large herds dotting the snows, appear,
With antic gambols, the far bounding deer;

LXXV.

And, further down, the Narraganset flood,
Unfurrowed yet by keel — its fretted blue
With isles begemmed, and skirted by the wood
Of far Coweset, — opens on his view;
So long he had beneath the forest trod,
That, when the prospect on his vision grew,
His soul as from a prison seemed to fly
And range in thought through an immensity.

LXXVI.

Raptured he paused. — Here then was Waban's mead;
In yonder little glen, the fountain by,
He'd rear his shelter — here his flocks should feed,
Cropping the grass beneath the summer sky;
There by his cot he'd sow the foodful seed,
And round his garden raise a paling high;
And there at twilight, should his herds be seen,
Following the tinkling bell from pastures green.

LXXVII.

Ay, here, in fancy, did he almost see
A lovely hamlet in the future blest,
Where Christians all might mutually agree
To leave their God to judge the human breast;

A place of refuge whitherto might flee
The hapless exile for his faith opprest,
And find his lately trammelled conscience free,
And for the scourge and gibbet — charity.

LXXVIII.

He thought he saw the various spires ascending
Of many churches, all of different kind,
And heard the Sabbath bells harmonious blending
Their calls to worshippers of various mind;
And saw the people as harmonious wending
To several worships, as their faith inclined;
And felt that Deity might bend the ear,
Such harmony from various chords to hear.

LXXIX.

But still across his mind a shadow came —
A doubt that seemed a superstitious fear;
For yet no Indian throng, with loud acclaim,
Had bid the welcome of Whatcheer! Whatcheer!
Till when he should be tossed; — as did proclaim
That nameless stranger — that mysterious seer; —
But from Haup's Sachem he a grant will gain;
Such were best welcome from that Sachem's train.

LXXX.

Full of this thought, he turned at close of day,
And gained the humble lodge as night came down;
And he could scarcely brook the short delay,
Till Waban, coming from the white man's town,
Should from Namasket, where the Sachem lay,
The cheering welcome bring, or blasting frown;
For thou, Soul-Liberty, couldst then no more
Than build thy hopes on that rude sagamore.

CANTO THIRD.

[Scenes. The Wigwam—Massasoit and other Chiefs—The Wilderness—A Night in the Wilderness—The Narraganset or Coweset Country—Coweset Height.]

No pain is keener to the ardent mind,
  Filled with sublime and glorious intents,
Than when strict judgment checks the impulse blind,
  And bids to watch the pace of slow events
To time the action ; — for it seems to bind
  The ethereal soul upon a fire intense,
Lit by herself within the kindling breast,
Prompting to act, while she restrains to rest.

II.

Two nights had passed, and, Waban lingering still,
  Williams began to doubt his steadfast faith ;
Quick was his foot o'er forest, vale and hill,
  His swerveless eyes aye keeping true his path.
Why does he tarry ? and the doubts instil
  Suspicions in our Sire of waking wrath
Against his purpose in the barbarous clan,
Whose fears e'en then on future dangers ran.

III.

But on the morrow's morn, while Williams mused, —
  Anxious and wondering at the long delay, —
The wigwam's entrance, by the deer-skin closed,
  Abruptly opened, and a warrior gay
Glided within it. To the sight unused
  Of Keenomp trimmed as for the battle fray,
Williams, recoiling, gazed with fixed surprise
On the fierce savage and his fearful guise.

IV.

The eagle's plumes waved round his hair of jet,
Whose crest-like lock played lightly o'er his head;
On breast and face the war-paints harshly met,
Down from his shoulders hung his blanket red,
With seeming blood his hatchet haft was wet, —
Its edge of death was by his girdle stayed;
Bright flashed his eyes, and, ready for the strife,
Gleamed in his hand the dreadful scalping-knife.

V.

He placed a packet, bound, in Williams' hands,
And fired his pipe, and sitting, curled its smoke,
The while our Founder broke the hempen bands,
And gave the contents an exploring look.
There found he, answered, all his late commands
To Waban, ere the wigwam he forsook;
And from his wife a brief epistle too,
Which told her sorrows since their last adieu:

VI.

How came the messengers with armed men
To search her mansion for "the heretic;"
How his escape provoked their wrath — and then
How they condemned him for his feigning sick;
But with the thought consoled themselves again,
That he had perished in the tempest thick;
God's righteous retribution, setting free
Their Israel from his heinous heresy.

VII.

But, as he reads, the warrior starting cries,
"War! war! my brother." — Willliams drops his hand,
And at the voice perceives, in altered guise
Till now unknown, the generous Waban stand

Erect and tall, with fiercely flashing eyes,
The while he pressed the hatchet in its band;
"Brother, there's war!" "With whom?" our Founder said;
"Have I not friends among my brothers red?"

VIII.

"Haup's valiant Sachem is my brother's friend,"
Red Waban answered; "and I come before
Him, and the train of Keenomps who attend
Him, coming here — our mightiest Sagamore —
To ask my brother that his aid he lend
'Gainst Narraganset's hatchet stained with gore;
Miantonomi lifts it o'er his head,
Gives the loud whoop, and names our valiant dead."

IX.

No time there was for Williams to reply
Ere near the lodge there rose a trampling sound,
And warriors entered, stained with every dye,
Crested and plumed, with — to their girdles bound —
The knife and hatchet; whilst the battle cry
Burst from the crowds that flocked the lodge around,
And lighted up, in every Keenomp's eye
That stared within, a dreadful sympathy.

X.

Amid the train came Massasoit old,
But not too old for direst battle fray;
Strong was his arm as was his spirit bold;
His judgment, bettered by experience gray,
The wildest passions of his tribe controlled,
And checked their fury in its headlong way;
Still with the whites his peace he had maintained,
The terror of whose aid his foes restrained.

XI.

There too came Corbitant, austere of mood,
And Annawan, who saw, in after times,
Brave Metacom, and all of kindred blood,
Slain, or enslaved and sold to foreign climes;
And strong Appanow, of Pocasset's wood,
And other chiefs of names unmeet for rhymes;
And round our Father, in the fearful trim
Of savage war, they gathered, wroth and grim.

XII.

Each fired his pipe, and seat in silence took;
Around the room a dreadful ring they made; —
Their eyes stared fiercely through the wreathing smoke,
And luridly their gaudy plumage played,
The while, obscured, they did scarce earthly look,
But seemed like fiends in their infernal shade;
And still the vapors rose and naught they spoke,
Till Massasoit thus the silence broke:

XIII.

"And is my brother here? What does he seek?
Tow'rd Wamponand, upon the passing wing,
A singing bird there went; its opening beak
Was by Namasket's wigwam heard to sing
That thou art friendless, homeless, poor and weak,
Seeking protection from an Indian King.
Do the white Sagamores their vengeance wreak,
E'en as the red ones, on their brethren? — Speak."

XIV.

Sire Williams answered: "'Twas no idle song
Sung by that bird which passed Namasket near;
I am an exile these drear wilds among,
And hope for kindness from the red men here.

Oft had thy friendship to the pale-faced throng,
That first Patuxet* peopled, reached my ear;
And a whisper told me thou wouldst still be kind
To those who fly, and leave their all behind."

XV.

Then rose the tawny monarch of the wood
To speak his memory, as became a chief;
And back he cast his crimson robes, and stood
With naked arm outstretched a moment brief;
Commanding silence by that attitude,
And to his words attention and belief.
Often he paused, his eyes on Williams fixt,
Whilst rang applause his weighty words betwixt.

XVI.

"Brother," he said, "full many a rolling year
Has cast its leaves and fruitage on the ground,
And many a Keenomp, to his country dear,
Has sate in death beneath his grassy mound,
Since first the pale Awanux kindled here
His council blaze, and so began to found
His tribes and villages, and far and near,
With thundering arms, to wake the red man's fear.

XVII.

"Brother, attend! When first Awanux came,
He was a child, not higher than my knee;
Hunger and cold consumed and pinched his frame;
Houseless on yonder naked shore was he;
Waves roared between him and his corn and game,
Snows clad the wilds, and winter vexed the sea;
His big canoe shrunk from the angry flood,
And death was on the barren strand he trod.

* Patuxet is the Indian name for Plymouth.

XVIII.

"Brother, attend! I gave the infant food;
My lodge was open and my fire was warm;
He gathered strength, and felt a richer blood
Renew the vigor of his wasted arm;
He grew — waxed strong — the trees began to bud;
He asked for lands a little town to form;
I gave him lands, and taught him how to plant,
To fish and hunt, — for he was ignorant.

XIX.

"Brother, attend! Still did Awanux grow;
Still did he ask for land; — I gave him more —
And more — and more, till now his hatchet's blow
Is at Namasket heard, with crash and roar
Of falling oaks, and, like the whit'ning snow,
His growing numbers spread my borders o'er;
Scarce do they leave a scant and narrow place
Where we may spread the blanket of our race."

XX.

Here paused the chief, as if to ask reply;
Of thankless guests he spoke, and seemed to say
That the white strangers grasped too eagerly,
Nor heeded aught their benefactor's sway.
Ne'er to the Indian did our Sire deny
His share of Heaven's free gifts; and, to allay
The ominous mistrust, he answered mild
The dusky king of Pokanoket's wild:

XXI.

"Brother, I know that all these lands are thine,
These rolling rivers, and these waving trees, —
From the Great Spirit came the gift divine;
And who would trespass upon boons like these?

I would take nothing, if the power were mine,
Of all thy lands, lest it should Him displease ;
But for just meed shouldst thou some part resign,
Would the Great Spirit blame the deed benign ? "

XXII.

" 'Tis not the peäg," said the sagamore,
" Nor knives, nor guns, nor garments red as blood,
That buy the lands I hold dominion o'er —
Lands that were fashioned by the red man's God ;
But to my friend I give, and take no more
Than to his generous bosom seemeth good ;
But still we pass the belt, and for the lands,
He strengthens mine, and I make strong his hands."

XXIII.

" Weak is my hand, brave chief," our Sire replied ;
" Aid do I need, but none can I bestow ;
Yet on the vacant plain, by Seekonk's tide,
I fain would build, and peaceful neighbors know ;
But if my brother has that plain denied,
Far tow'rds the setting sun will Williams go,
And on the lands of other chiefs abide,
Whose blankets are with ampler room supplied."

XXIV.

As thus our Founder spake, this murmur low
Circled that savage group of warriors round,
" The stranger will to Narraganset go ! "
" A hungry wolf shall in his path be found ! "
Rejoined stern Corbitant, whose eyes did glow
With kindling wrath ; — then from his belt unbound
His hatchet and beneath his blanket hid ; —
Warrior to warrior glanced, as this he did.

XXV.

Again Haup's Sachem broke the fearful pause:
"Brother, be wise; I gave thy brethren lands;
They smoked my pipe, and they espoused my cause;
They made me strong; and all the neighboring bands
Forsook the Narraganset Sachem's laws*
And mine obeyed. — We weakened hostile hands;
All dropt their arms and looked, but looked in vain,
For my white friends to measure back the main.

XXVI.

"This leaf, which budded of their hope, now dies;
The Narraganset warriors crest their hair;
Their hatchets keen from troubled slumber rise
And through Coweset make their edges glare;
Chiefs strike the war-post, — blood is in their cries,
And fierce their yells cleave Pokanoket's air;
They count already with revengeful eyes
The future scalps of vanquished enemies; —

XXVII.

"And all for Wampanoag's life-blood crave.
On Seekonk's marge the storm of war will burst;
Lands might I give thee there but that the wave
Will there run red with human slaughter first.
And yet my brother and his friends are brave;
His bulwarks there with guardian thunders pierced,
Might frown on harm; — for surely he would fight
Both for his own and for the giver's right.

XXVIII.

"And when the Narragansets by our arms
Are from the Seekonk driven far away,
No more molested by the wild alarms
Of scalping knife and tomahawk's affray,

* See notes to Canto Fourth.

We may together sit, secure from harms,
And smoke the calumet from day to day;
And our descendants, all the years to come,
Have but one fire — one undivided home."

XXIX.

"Brother," said Williams, "these thou seëst are
Hands that the blood of man ne'er crimsoned yet;
Oft do I lift them to the God of prayer —
Ah! how unseemly if with slaughter wet!
But to the hostile Sachems I could bear
The pipe of peace, thy snow-white calumet,
And quench the flame of strife — how better far
Than win thy lands by all-devouring war!

XXX.

"With Waban for my guide, in friendly guise,
Sachem, I would the arduous task essay
To heal those ancient feuds by counsel wise,
And quell the wrath begotten long away;
Were this not better than the sacrifice
Of armies slain in many a bloody fray?
Then may I plant, and, in each neighboring clan,
Meet with a friend where'er I meet a man.

XXXI.

"Ha! Yengee," said the Sachem, "wouldst thou go
To soothe the hungry panther scenting blood?
Say, canst thou bid Pawtucket's downward flow
Turn and run backward to Woonsocket's wood?
The path to peace is shut; — the eager foe
Sharpens his darts, and treads his dances rude,
And through the trembling groves the war-whoop trills
From bleak Manisses* to the Nipnet hills.

* Manisses—Block Island.

XXXII.

"Yengee! thou seest these Wampanoags brave —
They are my Keenomps in the battle fray;
Would it become Haup's sagamore to crave
Inglorious rest for warriors strong as they?
They shrink from nothing but a dastard's grave:
Bound to the stake, upon their lips would play
The smile of scorn. How can they crouch and cry
For peace?" — he said; and Williams made reply:

XXXIII.

"The Great Spirit, almighty o'er the Whole,
Wields earth at will and moulds the hearts of men;
At his command torrents may backward roll,
The hare may gambol in the panther's den;
In Him I trust, and in His strength my soul
Is more than armies. — Let your brother then
Ask for himself, if not for thee or thine,
That on these lands the sky of peace may shine.

XXIV.

"How could your brother plant, where all around
War's tempest raging pours its showers of blood?
Where from each thicket bursts the war-whoop's sound,
And death in ambush lurks in every wood?
When would the feet of his dear friends be found
To pass along the blood-stained solitude,
And bring their all — their dearer far than life —
Beneath uplifted axe and scalping knife?"

XXXV.

Upon our Father's words to meditate,
That wise old chief kept silence for a space;
Thus far he had prolonged the shrewd debate,
And inly striven his bounties to retrace —

Not, as it seemed at first, from growing hate,
But so to magnify his purposed grace,
That what he gave should be right worthy thought
Of the much needed succor that he sought.

XXXVI.

"Keenomps!" at length thus spake the Sagamore,
"Shall our white brother, not for me or mine,
But for himself, seek Narraganset's shore,
Disperse the clouds, and let the sunlight shine
From the blue sky of peace? — Our wounds are sore
But hatchets none to keen; and our design
May profit by delay, if he will light
His council fire and gathering friends invite.

XXXVII.

"His bow's now broken, and his knife now dull, —
But when his warriors shall around him throng —
Its sharpened edge will thirst to peel the skull
Of Narraganset foe; — and he, more strong,
Will wield a mightier weapon, and, more full
Of valor, help us guard ourselves from wrong;
Whilst many a soul he sends to join the ghosts
That cry for vengeance round Sowaniu's coasts.

XXXVIII.

"On Seekonk's marge — our battle-stained frontier —
His town will rise, and warlike will he feel;
The foe must pass him if he strike us here;
Our brother then will hang upon his heel,
Hinder his progress, and salute his ear
With the big thunders and the muskets' peal;
Lo! from the east the Tarrateen no more
Dare pass the Yengee by the ocean shore."

XXXIX.

As ceased the chief, a fierce smile lit the eyes
And curled the muscles of those men of blood;
They feared the number of their enemies;
This hope was cheering, and all answered — good!
All save stern Corbitant, whose visage is
Dark and portentous as a slumbering flood,
Whose silent bosom holds the imaged storm,
And seems the tempest that the skies deform.

XL.

Then rose each Keenomp, in his turn, and spake:
Each said his knife was sharp, his hands were strong;
But still such counsel as his chief might take
He should deem wise, and so advise his throng.
At length stern Corbitant did silence break;—
But first unloosened from its leathern thong
His scalping knife, and then a circle true
With its bare point upon the earth he drew.

XLI.

"So move the hunters," the grim sachem said,
Then near the centre made of scores a few;
"Here do the moose and deer the thickets thread
To certain death from them whose feet pursue;
Do not the Yengees thus around us spread?
Are we not hunted thus our forests through?
Will Haup's brave Sachem yield Awanux aid,
While weep the spirits of his kindred dead?"

XLII.

"Go! thou dark Corbitant!" the old chief cried,
"Unarmed, the stranger seeks our vacant land, —
Far from his friends would plant by Seekonk's tide,
His blood within the hollow of our hand.

When to the stranger has a chief denied
Food, fire, and space his blanket to expand?
Hunted by him! — when come his friends he may,
If timid deer we are, turn off the beasts of prey.

XLIII.

"He goes, and goes but for himself alone,
To ask that peace between the nations be,
And if the belt of Narraganset won
He bring to Haup, 'twill be received by me.
Now do I charge you, Keenomps, all as one,
That on his path no lurking wolves ye be.
Who dares with purpose fell his way to haunt,
Dies by this hand — e'en were he Corbitant.

XLIV.

"Do thou, swift Waban, with the Yengee go,
And point the way to Narraganset's clan;
If thou dar'st walk before the bended bow,
Bring back the talks, that we the words may scan;
In all things else to him obedience show —
He is thy sachem — be thou Winiams'* man.
But it were safe that thou the pipe should'st bear
Without that painted face and plumed hair."

XLV.

Then Williams brought his strings of wampum bright,
And to the Keenomps each a present made,
Which each received, and, mimicking the white,
His thanks returned, and uncouth bow essayed;
And Corbitant's grim visage seemed to light
With something like a smile that o'er it strayed,
To see the wampum wreath our Founder flung,
Where glittering on his breast the bauble hung.

* The Wampanoags could not say *l*, but used *n* in place of it.

XLVI.

To Haup's old chief a belt, with tinselry
Enchased, he gave, and trimmed with gilded wire;
Which when he donned, the warriors gazed in glee
Upon their Sachem in such brave attire;
Then filing singly, each in his degree,
They leave the lodge, and through the woods retire;
The chief appointing Haup, whereat to be
To hear the issue of the embassy.

XLVII.

Waban and Williams only tarried there,
And for the journey soon began to trim;
The red man doft his plumes, and loosed his hair,
And cleansed his visage of its colors grim;
Our Founder chose his Indian gifts to bear,
And pipe of peace, as well becoming him;
And forth they sallied, as from middle sky
The sun looked down between the branches high.

XLVIII.

Waban went foremost, upon nimble feet,
Through ancient grove and over woodland glade; —
His long black hair and blanket red, so fleet
He went, streamed backward in the breeze he made;
Often his form did out of sight retreat
Behind the crag — behind the thicket's shade —
And then his voice, along the echoing wood,
Told when he paused, or where his way pursued.

XLIX.

At length upon Pawtucket's marge they stood;
They heard the thunder of his falls below;
Though narrow was the pass, yet deep the flood,
And frail the ice to bridge its dangerous flow;

But on the bank a giant of the wood,
A towering hemlock, waved its lofty bough ;
Waban his keen-edged hatchet promptly plied ;
It bowed, it fell, and bridged the sounding tide.

L.

Upstayed thereon from bank to bank they past,
And now they travel under hostile sway :
The night around them gathers thick and fast,
Till, as more doubtful grows their devious way.
Their blankets on the frozen earth they cast,
And light the fire, and wait the coming day ; —
When safely they their journey may pursue,
And greet the chiefs they seek in season due.

LI.

Williams that night lay on the snow-clad ground,
With nothing o'er him but the starry blue ;
In parchéd maize and water pure he found
A sweet repast, that woke devotion true ;
For while he saw the soul constrained and bound,
With wings enthralled, but not her eagle view,
One pious prayer made every suffering light, —
That he might free and speed her heavenward flight.

LII.

The red man smoked his pipe, or trimmed the fire,
And to our Father many a story told
Of barbarous battles and of slaughter dire
That on Pawtucket's marge befell of old ; —
How always son inherited from sire
The same fierce passions in like bosom bold ;
And wondered that his pale-faced chief could dare
The pipe between such angry Sachems bear.

LIII.

"Ten summers since, on yonder margin green,"
He thus continued in a sadder tone,
"A strong old hunter — Keenomp he had been
Of many deeds — dwelt with his daughter lone:
She, like the bright-eyed fawn, whose beauteous mien
So charms the hunter that he stands like stone;
He, like the brawny stag, with burning eye
And antlers broad, and sinews that defy

LIV.

"The well-aimed shaft. Then Waban was a boy;
And, lonely, loved to go, by moonlight dim
Or dewy morn, to see, all life and joy,
The Bright-Eyed Fawn. But ah! it chanced to him
One morn to seek her at her home's employ —
And, O! what havoc there! — what horrors grim!
The old man lay in gore! — his daughter gone!
His lodge in ashes! But the dewy lawn

LV.

"Showed prints of hostile feet. Waban is true —
He followed on the trail — a devious route;
Far up the winding stream the morning dew
Betrayed their steps, and hers with theirs; here out
They turned — leaping from rock to rock, they drew
Still onward far, until a thrilling shout,
From far Woonsocket, died on Waban's ears:
He pauses — listens — and again he hears —

LVI.

"The *Pequot's* yell! My Sachem sure has seen
The well-drawn arrow leave the red man's bow;
So Waban went — the steps he made between
Him and his foes no memory left — e'en now

Waban is there ; and, from behind a screen,
Formed by the leaf of bush and bending bough,
He saw the Bright-Eyed Fawn, bound to the stake —
The fagots heaped around — the flames awake !

LVII.

" Two warriors, standing, mock her cries, and four,
In the fire-water drenched, lie here and there
In slumber deep, from which they woke no more.
One arrow Waban sent ; — through shoulder bare
Transfixed, one scoffer fell, and quenched in gore
His kindling brand. Then, sprnging from his lair,
As panther springs, with the bright glancing knife
Did Waban dart, and, hand to hand in strife,

LVIII.

" Cleft down the second, who, with wild amaze, [Fawn
But faintly fought ; — straight from the Bright-Eyed
The bands were cut, and from the rising blaze
She springs unscathed. The slumberers on the lawn
Were not forgot : they slept — they sleep — yet gaze
(If gaze that be which is all sightless) ; dawn,
Noon, and night, are one. Broad Antler's ghost
Wandered not long upon Sowaniu's coast ;

LIX.

" Fully avenged, he sought the spirit band
Of his brave fathers, whilst the daughter, won
By Waban from the cruel Pequot's hand,
Dwelt in his lodge, the mother of his son.
All now are gone — gone to the spirit land,
And Waban's left all desolate and lone."
Such tales the evening hours beguiled, and filled
With breathless zest, or with blank horror chilled.

LX.

They slept at last, though piercing cold the night,
And round them howled the hungry beasts of prey;
Nor broke their slumber, till the dawning light
Gleamed in the east, — when they resumed their way.
Encrusted hard and flashing far and bright,
The snow sent back the rising solar ray;
Mooshausick's wave was bridged from shore to shore,
And safe they passed the solid water o'er.

LXI.

Westward till now his course did Waban draw;
He shunned Weybosset, the accustomed ford,
Where dwelt dark Chepian's priest, that grim Pawaw,
Who well he knew the Yengee's faith abhorred,
And who, perchance, if he our Founder saw
Bearing the pipe of peace, might ill accord
With such kind purpose, and, on evil wing
To Narraganset's host strange omens bring.

LXII.

Now down the western bank their course they speed,
Passing Pawtuxet in their onward way;
And fast doth Indian town to town succeed,
Some large, some small, in populous array;
And here and there was many an ample mead,
Where green the maize had grown in summer's ray,
And forth there poured, where'er they passed along,
Of naked children many a gazing throng.

LXIII.

Their small sunk eyes, like sparks from burning coal,
On the white stranger stared; but when they spied
The Wampanoag, they began to roll
With all the fury — mimicking the pride —

Of their fierce fathers ; and the savage soul,
Nursed e'en in youth on thoughts in carnage dyed,
Instinctively, with simultaneous swell,
Sent from their lips the unfledged battle yell.

LXIV.

Their little bows they twanged with threatening mien,
Their little war-clubs shook to tell their ires ;
Their mimic scalping-knives they brandished keen,
And acted o'er the stories of their sires ;
And had their fathers at this moment seen
(For they were gone to Potowomet's fires),
Our Founder's guide, they might have caught the tone
Of their young urchins, and the hatchet thrown.

LXV.

Still village after village smoked ; the woods
All swarmed with life as forward still they fared ;
For numbers great, but not for multitudes
So numberless, had Williams been prepared ;
Was it for him to tamper with the moods
Of these fierce savages, whose arms were bared,
Whose souls were ripe, and stalwart bodies trim,
For the wild revelry of slaughter grim ?

LXVI.

How could he hope a safe abiding place,
Far in these forests, and his friends so few —
Among a wild and blood-besotted race,
That naught of laws divine or human knew ;
Their wars proceeding oft from mad caprice,
Their hearts as hard 's the tomahawks they threw : —
Would his temerity by Heaven be blest ?
Would God nurse zephyrs on the whirlwind's breast ?

LXVII.

Whilst musing thus, and onward moving still,
His soul o'ershadowed with suspicious fears,
He gained the summit of a towering hill,
And downward gazed.— Far stretched beneath appears
A woodland plain ; and murmurs harsh and shrill,
As from accordant voices, on his ears
Rise from the midmost groves, and o'er the trees,
A hundred smokes curl on the morning breeze.

LXVIII.

And now to sight, through leafless boughs revealed,
Now hid where thicker branches wove their screen,
Bounding and glancing, in swift circles wheeled
Men painted, plumed, and armed with weapons sheen ,
And flashing clear or by the trees concealed, —
Glimmering again and waved with threatening mien, —
The lifted tomahawks and lances bright
Seemed to forestall the the frenzied joy of fight.

LXIX.

Mixed with the sound of voices and of feet,
Alternate slow and fast, the hollow drum
Its measured rote or rolling numbers beat,
And ruled in various mood the general hum ; —
Now slow the sounds, now rapid their repeat,
Till at a sudden pause, did thrilling come
That tremulous far undulating swell,
From out a thousand lips, the warrior's yell ; —

LXX.

As 'twere from frantic demons. And the face
Of Waban paled — then darkened as he said,
" The Narragansets there their war-dance trace,
They count our scalps, and name our kindred dead ;

This heart grows big — it cannot ask for peace;
'Twould rather rot upon a gory bed
Than hear the spirits of its sires complain,
And call for blood, — but ever call in vain."

LXXI.

"Waban," said Williams, "dost thou fear to go?
Wilt thou thy Yengee sachem leave alone?
How will thy Sagamore the speeches know,
If homeward now his messenger should run?
Not thou, but I will ask the haughty foe
To quench his fires, and quell the dance begun;
But for thy safety, thou the calumet
Shalt bear beside me, till the chiefs are met."

LXXII.

"Waban," he answered, "never shook with fear,
Nor left his Sachem when he needed friends;
It is the thought of many a by-gone year
That kindles wrath within my breast, and sends
Through all this frame, my boiling blood on fire! —
Still Waban on his pale-faced chief attends,
But bears no pipe; — the Wampanoag's pride
Bids him to die, as his brave fathers died."

LXXIII.

"Waban, at least, will smoke the pipe awhile?"
Said Williams gravely to his moody guide,
"Its fragant breath is as on billows oil;
It calms the troubled waves of memory's tide."
The grateful offer seemed to reconcile
The peaceful emblem to the warrior's pride:
He fills the bowl — he wakes the kindling fire —
And o'er his head the curling clouds aspire.

LXXIV.

And whilst he sits, the sylvan muse will string
Her rustic harp to wake no gentle strain
Of barbarous camps, and savage chiefs who sing
The song of vengeance to their raptured train;
Of councils, and of wizard priests that bring
Strange omens, dark dominion to maintain;
Of incantations dire, and of that spell
By Sesek wrought — which seemed the feat of Hell.

CANTO FOURTH.

[Scene. The Narraganset Camp at Potowomet.]

The twain have left the height, and sought the glade
Where the red warriors wheel the martial dance;
A while the thick young cedars round them made
A cover that concealed their still advance;
But passing quickly through the denser shade,
Sire Willliams sent abroad his searching glance
O'er the rude camp, and saw, on every side,
Around the blazing fires the dancers glide.

II.

Hundreds on hundreds thronged the glade, I ween,
With painted visages and pluméd hair;
There bristled darts, there glittered lances sheen,
And brandished knives upon the ambient air
Carved fiery circles — whilst, with threatening mien,
Their dark locks streaming and their muscles bare,
The dancers circled o'er the thundering ground,
And leaping, breathed the hard, harsh, aspirated sound.

III.

But chiefly tow'rd the centre pressed the throngs
Where plied the bravest chiefs their dances rude: —
There listened to their Sachem's battle songs,
And when he ceased, in leaps his lance pursued;
The while the tumult swelled until their lungs,
Wrung to the highest effort, filled the wood
With the wild war-whoop, tremulous and shrill,
Then hushed itself and suddenly was still;

IV.

Till from the groups another Sachem sprung,
To tell his deeds, and count his foemen slain ;
Lancing the war-post as his numbers rung,
As if he slew his vanquished foe again ;
Whilst on his words the listening warriors hung,
And drank with greedy ears the bloody strain,
Cheering at times with plaudits loud and long,
The butcheries numbered in the martial song.

V.

Amid the tumult of this boisterous rout,
Williams, unmarked, had gained the central glade,
When all at once an unaccustomed shout
Startled the groups around the fires arrayed,
And staring eyes, and pointing hands about,
Proclaimed the strangers to their view betrayed ;
Then died that hum, like the past whirlwind's roar,
When the dust rises on the distant shore.

VI.

And all were hushed, while round them, man to man
They glanced, and wonder in their faces grew,
Till through the camp the sullen rumor ran,
" Pale-faced Awanux ! Wampanoag too ! "
And warriors, kindling at the words, began
To grasp their weapons all that gathering through ;
When, lo ! they opened like a parting tide,
And once again their murmurs lulled and died.

VII.

And Williams paused ; for, from the severed crowd,
A chief advancing trod the breathing plain ;
Bold was his port, his bearing high and proud,
A lance of length did his right hand sustain ;

The glittering wampum did his brows enshroud,
His nodding plumage wore a crimson stain ;
His armlets gleamed — his belt, with figures traced,
Supported skirts with purple pëag laced.

VIII.

His naked limbs were stained a sable hue,
His naked chest and face a crimson red ;
Streamed backward from his brow two ribbons blue,
And with his long black hair wild dalliance made ;
Suspended from his belt, half sheathed from view,
His scalping knife and tomahawk were stayed ;
His eyes below his lowering forehead glowed
Like two bright stars beneath a thunder cloud.

IX.

With strong majestic stride and lofty gait,
He neared our Founder and his dusky guide,
Who, in half tone, could but ejaculate,
" Miantonomi ! " when his Indian pride
Choked further utterance, though still elate,
Grasping his axe, with nostrils spreading wide,
Self-poised he stood ; appearing to await
The approaching chief, who glanced disdainful hate.

X.

Our Founder chid his guide, and high displayed
The calumet in one white hand, the while
He raised the other, and mild gesture made
Bespeaking peace. Well did the act beguile
And soothe the Sachem's passion, and he said,
Turning from Waban, with a scornful smile :
" Has, then, Awanux come to hear the song ?
Our darts are thirsty. and our arms are strong ! "

XI.

Then Williams : " Sachem, in the cause of Him,
The great Good Spirit whom we all adore —
Who smiles not on the contests fierce and grim
Of his red children in the field of gore —
I have come hither, in unwarlike trim,
To crave thy friendship, and of thee implore
That these black clouds portending bloody rain
May go, and let the sky shine out again."

XII.

So answering, the calumet of peace
He tendered to that warlike Sagamore,
Who clenched his hands, and backward stept a pace,
" Nay ! Nay, Awanux ! Wampanoag gore
Will M'antonomi's feet in battle trace
Ere dies another moon. He hears no more ;
'Tis not for him, amid these Keenomps bold,
To talk of peace — that suits his uncle old."

XIII.

Williams to this : " Then the gray chief is wise ;
His glance is forward, and around him turns ;
But o'er the young chief clouds of anger rise,
He sees but backward, and his vengeance burns ;
Show me to him who looks with wisdom's eyes
Upon the nations, and most truly learns,
From by-gone toils and dangers of his life,
To prize the pipe above the scalping-knife."

XIV.

At this his bosom the young Sachem struck,
And braced his frame, and flashed his kindling eye —
" This breast is generous," he proudly spoke,
" Of like for like abundant its supply ;

Of good and bad it hath an ample stock ;
It cheers its friend, it blasts its enemy —
Ten favors does it for each favor done,
And ten darts sends for every hostile one.

XV.

" Follow the war-chief ; — mid yon heavy cloud
Of warriors grim in arms and martial dyes,
Sits the gray Sachem in his numbers proud,
But prouder still in counsels old and wise."
So spake he, striding tow'rd the lowering crowd.
Williams to calmness did his guide advise ;
And both with cautious step and slow pursued
The Sachem tow'rd that fearful multitude.

XVI.

Not more horrific gleams the glistering snake,
Where coiled on glowing rocks he basking lies,
When, at the approaching step his rattles shake,
Flickers his forky tongue, and burn his eyes,
Than glared that crowd of warriors round the stake,
Arrayed in murderous arms and martial guise;
Their turbulent murmurs kindling through the whole
The sympathetic wrath of one inspiring soul.

XVII.

But when the Sachem, coming, near them trod,
He raised his open hand, and, pausing, spoke :
" Keenomps ! Awanux, prompted by his God,
Brings back the pipe the Wampanoag broke.
Our fathers ever answered good with good,
And for the bearer of the pipe ne'er woke
The storm of vengeance ; — list ye to his talk ;
He brings no message from the tomahawk."

XVIII.

As thus he spake, the sullen murmurs died,
And, hushed and listening, all the warriors stood ;
Again he moved — and at his onward stride
The deep mass parted like a severing flood ;
And, yielding either way, the living tide
Left clear the space through which our Founder trod :
Their breath alone he heard — like the hoarse breeze
Foreboding tempests to the shuddering trees.

XIX.

At last he came where the old Sachems sate,
Who formed the Narraganset senate grave ;
Renowned were they once, in fierce debate
Of battle dire, as bravest of the brave ;
But now, as guardians of their little state,
To younger hands they prudent counsel gave.
Their youth was gone, but their experience sage
Had thrice its value in a wise old age.

XX.

On settles, raised around the mounting blaze,
Sit gray Wauontom, Keenomp, Sagamore ;
But he who most attracts our Founder's gaze
Is sage Canonicus, whose tresses hoar
Float on the passing breeze ; whose brow displays
The care-worn soul in many a furrowed score ;
But whose bright eyes, that underneath it glow.
Still show the chief of sixty years ago.

XXI.

Beside him lay the calumet of peace —
It was his sceptre mid the din of arms ;
No martial dyes did on his visage trace
The lines of wrath — for him they had no charms ;

The neyhom's* mantle did his shoulders grace,
With ample folds that stayed the winter's harms;
At every movement, changing in the sun,
From plume to plume its glistering glories run.

XXII.

Mute were the chiefs and seemed to meditate;
Nor turned their heads, nor cast a glance aside,
When on the offered mat our Founder sate,
And close behind him came his watchful guide.
Then spread the warriors round in circle great,
And did the earth beneath their numbers hide;
They sit, kneel, stand, or climb the forest boughs,
Till all around the live enclosure grows.

XXIII.

When ceased the crowd to stir, and died their hum,
Long on our Sire the old chief kept his gaze;
At length he said: "And has Awanux come?
He's welcome to the red man's council blaze.
What news brings he from the pale stranger's home?
Or from the dog that near his wigwam strays?
Our young men see the pipe — what does it seek?
Our ears are open — let Awanux speak."

XXIV.

Sire Williams rose; — a thousand staring eyes
Were on him fixed; a thousand ears were spread
To catch his words, whilst all around him lies
That mass of life hushed in a calmness dread,
Like that of dark Ontario, when the skies
Are mustering their tempests overhead;
And the round moon looks through the gathering storm
And, glassed mid tempest shapes, beholds her form.

* The neyhom, or wild turkey. See note.

XXV.

He paused a while; at last he thus began:
"Sachem of many moons, and wise as gray!
Well knowest thou how short the life of man;
These aged oaks have witnessed the decay
Of many a generation of thy clan,
Which flourished like their leaves, and past away;
Why war ye, then, upon a life so brief! —
Why fill its little span with wretchedness and grief?

XXVI.

But they who seek the pure unmingled goods
That last for aye, — to strenuous duty true, —
Count freedom of the soul, in her high moods,
The first of gifts from the Great Manittoo: —
For this I wander to these distant woods;
For this from persecution's brands I flew,
And left my friends, my kindred, and my home,
Through stormy skies and snowy wilds to roam.

XXVII.

"Some thoughts of mine, that the Great Spirit might
Rule better His own kingdom than frail men,
Awoke the anger of my brothers white,
And sent me forth to seek some far-off glen,
Where I, unharmed, my council fire might light,
And share its freedom with my kindred, when
Under the tree of peace, the red men should
Smoke the white pipe in friendly neighborhood.

XXVIII.

On Seekonk's eastern marge I chose a glade,
Fertile and fair, with hope to plant thereon;
The Wampanoag would the grant have made,
But, momently, the startling rumor run

That all Coweset was in arms arrayed
Against that chief, and, had the dance begun ;
Then paused your brother — for he would not bring
His friends to sit beneath the hatchet's swing.

XXIX.

" Then did he take Haup's calumet to crave
That peace between the hostile nations be ;
Not that the Wampanoag warriors brave
Sought from the Narraganset storm to flee ;
But that no guilty stain, on Seekonk's wave,
Rebuke the Pokanoket Chief or thee, —
The work, perchance, of darts from heedless bows,
Confounding pale-faced friends with warring foes.

XXX.

" My motives these ; now let the wise chief tell
What wrongs he suffers ; what redress he seeks.
Do not his buried kindred slumber well ?
What murdered victim's ghost for vengeance shrieks —
Sends through the echoing woods the warrior's yell,
And from its iron sleep the hatchet wakes ?
Or does some impious tongue his anger brave,
By speaking names made sacred by the grave ? "

XXXI.

Then passed a murmur through that concourse wide,
And man on man cast the inquiring eye ;
At length the old chief laid his pipe aside,
And, musing, sate, as pondering his reply ;
Then slowly rose, and drew the plumed hide
From his right shoulder, and, with stature high,
Stretched forth his long bare arm and shriveled hand,
And pointing round the sky-encircled land ; —

XXXII.

"As far," he said, and solemn was his tone,
"As from Coweset's hill the hunter's sight
Goes tow'rd the Nipnet — tow'rd the rising sun —
And o'er the mighty billows, foaming bright,
Where bleak Manisses' shores they thunder on,
Moved Narraganset warriors, — till the White
Came from the east, and o'er the waters blue,
Brought his loud thunders in the big canoe:

XXXIII.

"Yes, ere he came, Pocasset's martial band
Did at our bidding come to fight the foe,
And the tall warriors of the Nipnet land
Rushed with swift foot to bend our battle bow;
And e'en the dog of Haup did cringing stand
Beside our wigwam, and his tribute show.
Then we were strong — we fought the Maquas fell,
And laughed to hear the bordering Pequot's yell.

XXXIV.

"But, Yengee, hear: The pale-faced strangers came;
No runners told us that they trod our shores;
Near the big waters rose their council flame,
And to it ran our eastern Sagamores;
Haup's dog forgot the Narraganset name,
And ate the the offal cast from white men's doors,
Moved at their heels, and after him he drew
The strong Pocassets, and the Nipnets too.

XXXV.

"Then the fierce Pequots on our borders broke, —
We sent the belt to claim the accustomed aid;
The rebel chiefs the angry hatchet shook —
They were the Yengee's men, not ours, they said;

We stood alone; and, like a steadfast rock,
Turned back the torrent to its fountain head,
Which else had swept those sluggard tribes away,
That by Awanux' wigwam slumbering lay.

XXXVI.

"These are our wrongs, and who can ever mend
The belt thus broken by the rebel train?
The falling waters with earth's bosom blend,
And who shall hold them in his palm again?
Against the common foe our warriors spend
Their blood like rivers — who can wake the slain?
Heal up the wounds for other men endured —
Give back the blood which has their rest secured?"

XXXVII.

The Sachem ceased, and mingled murmurs ran
Through all that crowd — "He speaks a manittoo!
Base Wampanoag! we'll devour that clan,
And drive the Yengees back o'er ocean blue!"
And through the concourse motions mixed began,
With clash of arms, and twanging of the yew;
But when they saw our Founder rise again,
Mute stillness hushed the murmurs of the train.

XXXVIII.

"Brother," said Williams, "thou art old and wise,
And know'st the pipe is better than the dart.
The barb can drink the blood of enemies;
But the pipe's conquest is the foeman's heart;
It gives to us his strength and energies,
And makes the Pequot from our path depart.
This, to the good, gives triumph long and just —
That, to the bad, a victory over dust.

XXXIX.

"If, then, my brother can subdue his foes
By the white pipe, he will be very strong!
The offending chiefs once more will bend his bows,
And shout around his fire their battle song;
No more will Pequot harass his repose,
Or Maqua yells resound these hills among.
See not my brothers whence all this distrust? —
The belt between them and the Yengees rust.

XL.

"Hearken a space — Deem not the Yengee weak;
Betwixt him and Haup's chief the chain is bright;
If thou on him a finger's vengeance wreak,
The conscious chain will vibrate to the White,
And, roused from slumber, will the big guns speak,
And flames will flash from every woodland height.
Pause, brother, pause — and to the pale-faced train
Extend thy friendship, and keep bright the chain.

XLI.

"But hearken still — Thy brother knows no guile;
His tongue speaks truly what his heart conceives;
Against the Pequots do your bosoms boil,
And for the Pequot deeds Awanux grieves;
Their hands are laden with the white man's spoil,
And crimsoned with the stain that murder leaves;
Soon will the big guns to their nation speak,
And, in their aid, may'st thou just vengeance wreak.

XLII.

"Thou would'st compel the Wampanoag's aid
To guard thy borders, and chastise thy foes;
Will not my brothers let me them persuade
To get them warriors armed with more than bows?

Even Awanux, in his strength arrayed,
Whose thunder roars and whose red lightning glows?
Make him your friend and victory follows sure,
And Narraganset rests in peace secure."

XLIII.

The old chief downward gazed; the warriors round,
Some in stern silence sate of doubtful mood,
Some gave a scornful smile, some fiercely frowned,
And others toiled to sharp their darts for blood;
At length the Sachem, rising from the ground,
With piercing eyes, full in the visage viewed
Our anxious Founder. — "Thou dost speak," he said,
"The words of wisdom, but these ears are dead;

XLIV.

"Dead to a Yengee's voice. When did the tongue
Of the white stranger fail to speak most fair?
When did his actions not his speeches wrong,
And lay the falsehood of his bosom bare?
Fain would I die in peace, and leave this throng
To have their glory down the ages fare;
But still I feel the stranger's grasping hand,
And still he soothes me with his accents bland.

XLV.

"If true he speak — that should his actions show;
May not his heart be darker than yon cloud,
And yet his words white as its falling snow?
Still, if his speech were true, and not a shroud
To hide dark thought, these gray hairs yet might go
Down to the grave in peace — and of my blood
Might all, whilst rivers roll, or rain descends,
Live with the Yengee, kind and loving friends."

XLVI.

'Twas for our Founder now in turn to pause —
He felt his weakness at rebuff so stern ;]
The kid had leaped beneath the lion's paws,
Whose fangs began to move, and eyes to burn ;
At length he said, " What bold encroachment draws
The Sachem's mind into this deep concern ?
How have the Yengees given thee offence ?
What deeds of theirs have marred thy confidence ? "

XLVII.

At this, the Sachem from his girdle took
His snow-white pipe, and snapt the stem in twain :
" They came intruders, and the pipe was broke,"
Said the stern Sachem, and it snapt again ;
" Our subject chiefs their ruling chiefs forsook,
And they were sheltercd by the stranger's train.
This fragment shows the serpent's skin they sent,
Filled with round thunders to our royal tent.

XLVIII.

" This shows, they raised their bulwarks high and proud,
And poised their big guns at our distant home.
This, when at Sowams* raged our battle loud,
How their round thunders made that battle dumb.
This, the fire-water how they have bestowed,
And with its madness have our youth o'ercome.
This, how amid the Pequot nation they
Build the square lodge, and whet him to the fray.

XLIX.

" This, with the Maqua how a league they made,
And filled with arms his all-destroying hand.
This, how they claim right over quick and dead —
Our fathers' buried bones, their children's land.

* See note to stanza XXXIII.

This, how the earth grows pale, as fast they spread
From glade to glade, like snow from Wamponand,
When borne o'er ocean on the sounding gales,
It crowns the hills and whitens through the vales.

L.

"Take thou the fragments — count their numbers well —
Ten times complains our violated right;
They'll help thy memory, and perchance will tell,
Ten causes have we to distrust the White;
Scarce can the grave our fathers' spirits quell —
They come complaining in the dreams of night;
Ten times the pipe was by the strangers broke,
Ten times the hatchet from its slumbers woke."

LI.

Williams the fragments took, and, counting ten,
He promptly answered with this calm reply:
"Sachem, some charity is due to men
Who tread upon thy pipe unwittingly.
Long had the waters tossed those wanderers, when,
Hungry and cold, they came thy borders nigh;
And, Sachem, they were ignorant of thy race,
They only sought a safe abiding place.

LII.

"And this they found in that deserted strand,
Where slept the dead — where living men were not;
They knew no wrong in this — a rightful hand
Appeared, and welcomed to the vacant spot;
Each Sachem seemed as sovereign of his band —
They took his belt, for t'was a token brought
Of friendly greeting — who can this condemn?
They aid the Whites, the Whites in turn aid them.

LIII.

"Bound in the skin of the great sachem snake,
My brother sent his barbs — but to his foe,
Awanux took the challenge by mistake,
And let his bullets for an answer go;
They deemed the Sachem angry, and did take
Some wise precaution 'gainst a secret blow;
They raise their bulwarks, and their guns they poise;
This was respect to sovereign brave and wise.

LIV.

"No leagues have they with the fierce Maqua made,
Nor with the Pequot hostile is the race;
But if my brothers, for the fight arrayed,
O'er Pokanoket's borders speed their pace,
I dare not say they would forego the aid
Of any tribe that would thy battle face;
Mohegans, Pequots, Tarrateens would fly
To join their force, and swell their battle cry.

LV.

"To these six fragments of the pipe I've spoke;
Take them again, if I have answered well;
But those which tell me that the stem was broke
By the fire-water, and of what befel
Thee upon Haup — of claims thou canst not brook,
Made by those strangers from the nations pale
To these broad forests as their own domain —
These will I ask Awanux to explain.

LVI.

"This fragment tells me that his numbers grow,
That they are spreading fast, from glade to glade;
If the Great Spirit does increase bestow,
Will the wise Sachem that great Power upbraid?

The lands they take, well does my brother know,
They fairly purchase of the nations red;
E'en thus would I on Seekonk's marge abide,
If peaceful nations dwelt on either side.

LVII.

"On Seekonk's bank, betwixt my brothers white
And the red nations I might friendly stand,
And help them still to understand aright
Whate'er was doubtful from each other's hand;
The chain of friendship hold, and keep it bright,
And strengthen thus all Narraganset's band;
Till 'gainst our common foes we all unite,
And conquer safety through resistless might.

LVIII.

"This question seeks the Sachem's plain reply:
Takes he the pipe — lays he the axe aside?
Have I his peace, or does he peace deny,
Nor in my honest counsels aught confide?
Still chooses he the doubtful strife to try,
And brave the Yengees with his foes allied?
Say — can he listen to an exiled man,
Whose words and deeds might still befriend his clan?"

LIX.

"Brother," the Sachem said in milder tone,
"Six fragments of the pipe, as well explained,
My willing hand receives — I ponder on
The last in doubt — the three, thou hast retained,
Send to Awanux — may he answer soon,
And show our blindness has of them complained;
Thy heart seems open, and its speech is brave;
Queries of weight demand an answer grave.

LX.

" Large is our regal lodge, and furnished well
With skins of beaver, bear, and buffalo;
Nausamp and venison is its royal meal;
And its warm fire is like the summer's glow:
There, with that Wampanoag shalt thou dwell,
And all our comforts in full safety know;
The whilst, our old chiefs shall, in council great,
Upon thy questions gravely meditate."

LXI.

Here closed the long debate, and, from the ground,
Rose the thronged warriors, and hoarse murmurs past
Through all that concourse, like the hollow sound
Of Narraganset's waters, when the blast
Begins to roll the tumbling billows round
The rock-bound cape, which had so lately glassed
Its imaged self — its pendant crags and wood —
In the calm bosom of the silent flood.

CANTO FIFTH.

[Scenes. A Sequestered Dale—Open Glade and Grand National Council —The Summit of Haup.]

Deep in the dale's sequestered solitude,
Screened from the winter's storm and chilling blast
By branching cedars and thick underwood,
And ever with their shadows overcast,
Old Narraganset's regal wigwam stood,
Where dwelt her chief, while yet the cold did last,
And tempests, driving from the frozen north,
Detained his warriors from the work of wrath.

II.

And near it rose an ample council hall,
Where oft the Narraganset senate sate,
When came the wise men, at their Sachem's call,
On schemes of high emprise to hold debate;
And in the shade were shelters meet, for all
His grave advisers who should on him wait;
And, with the red men just as with the white,
Such free provision did delays invite.

III.

Here Father Williams must a while remain.
And, with apt converse born of feelings mild,
Soothe the stern natures of the warlike train,
His destined neighbors in that barbarous wild;
Allay distrust and confidence obtain,
Until suspicion and fierce wrath, despoiled
Of all their terrors, leave the vanquished mind
To generous friendship and full faith inclined.

IV.

Day after day he passed from man to man,
Whome'er of note the mightier Sachems swayed,
And, to the chieftains of each martial clan,
In paints all grim — in horrid arms arrayed —
He talked of peace; then o'er the dangers ran,
Were war against the Wampanoag made;
And then besought them that with friendly eyes,
They would behold his smoke from Seekonk rise.

V.

Betwixt the tribes, on either side the stream,
Still he the belt would hold — the pipe would bear;
But never in his hand should lightning gleam
For either Sachem when he rushed to war;
And with the Yengees still might it beseem
Him to promote an understanding fair,
Till wide the tree of peace its branches spread,
And white and red men smoked beneath its shade.

VI.

But chiefly did he this free converse hold
With M'antonomi, Sachem young and brave,
And great Canonicus, sagacious, old
And in his speech deliberate and grave.
One eve they sate — the storm without was cold,
'Twas ere the council their decision gave,
And thus the talk went on among the three,
The questions simple and the answers free.

VII.

MIANTONOMI.

Why will my brother dwell amid our foes,
Yet seek from us a peaceful neighborhood?
May we not think he'll bend their battle bows,
And thirst like them for Narraganset's blood?

Why has he Seekonk's eastern border chose,
And not surveyed Mooshausick's winding flood?
Its banks are green, — its forests waving fair, —
Its fountains cool, the deer abundant there.

VIII.

WILLIAMS.

Ne'er will I dwell among my brother's foes, —
To make them friends is now thy brother's toil;
Too weak I am to bend their battle bows,
Had I the heart for such unseemly broil.
The forest fair that by Mooshausick grows,
Would long withstand the hardy woodman's toil.
The Seekonk's marge will easy tillage yield,
And soon the spiry maize will clothe its field.

IX.

CANONICUS.

How could my brother's thoughts his friends offend?
Why flies he to the red from faces pale?
How can he still the nations red befriend?
What can his speeches with his foes avail?
No arms he bears, no Yengees him attend,
How dares his foot to print this distant vale?
The path was shut between the nations red, —
How dared my brother on that path to tread?

X.

WILLIAMS.

The white man labors to enthrall the mind,
He will not let its thoughts of God be free;
I come the soul's hard bondage to unbind,
And clear her access to the Deity;

The pale-faced foes whom I have left behind,
Would still accept a favor done by me.
I trusted God would guard his servant's head,
Open all paths, and soothe my brothers red.

XI.

CANONICUS.

Thy generous confidence has on me won
And oped my ears, to other Yengees deaf.
Brother, the spirit of my son is gone —
I burned my lodge to speak my mighty grief;
If thou art true I am not left alone,
Some comfort is there for the gray-haired chief;
If to thy words the fitting deeds be done,
I am thy father, thou shalt be my son.

XII.

The kindest reader would fatigued complain,
Should I recount each question and reply,
That passed between our Father and the train
Of barbarous warriors and their Sachems high;
But though he languished o'er my humble strain,
Till patience left or dullness closed his eye,
To Williams it was not an idle song —
The dull reality did days prolong.

XIII.

They had their Corbitants of surly mood,
Who scarce would yield obedience to their lord;
Alike they thirsted for the Yengees' blood,
And Wampanoag's and alike abhorred.
By gaudy gifts their anger he subdued,
Or won their kindness by his soothing word;
But one there was who spurned all proffers kind,
Whose demon hate was to all goodness blind.

XIV.

It was the grim Pawaw. — He came in ire
From his proud dwelling by Mooshausick's stream ;
His was the voice of gods and omens dire,
And loud he chanted his prophetic dream ;
" The white man's gods had set the woods on fire,
And Chepian vanished in its fearful gleam ;
Their fathers' ghosts came from their hunting ground —
Their children sought, and only ashes found."

XV.

Gravely attentive did the council hear
That crafty priest his awful omens sing.
The warriors, ruled by superstitious fear,
Half credence gave, and overawed the king.
In groups they thronged the forest, far and near,
With gathered brows and surly muttering ;
And still the prophet through the kindling crowds,
Moved like a comet through night's lowering clouds.

XVI.

And as he passed, the varying rumors flew
Of secret plans hatched by the Yengees' hate ;
And still their fears and doubts and wonder grew,
Whilst on that dream the chiefs prolonged debate ;
For priest he was and politician too,
And oft he meddled with affairs of state,
Wrought on the fears of superstition's crew,
And the best counsels of the wise o'erthrew.

XVII.

Thus, when the senate dared resist his sway,
He still gained triumph with the multitude ;
Till now the chiefs, half yielding to dismay,
Yet vexed and goaded by his rebel mood,

Bade that the clans assemble on a day,
And Williams meet the prophet of the wood,
And in their presence front and overthrow
His strange dominion, or all hope forego.

XVIII.

I will not say that devils did enlist
To do the bidding of the grim Pawaw;
He may have been a wild ventriloquist,
Formed by rude nature; but the age which saw
The marvels that he wrought, would aye insist
His spells surpassed material nature's law;
And that the monarch of the infernal shade
Mustered his legions to the wizard's aid.

XIX.

Great was his fame; for wide the rumor went
That all the demons were at his command,
And fiends in rocks, and dens, and caverns pent,
Came to the beck of his black waving hand;
The boldest Keenomps, on resistance bent,
Could not the terror of his charms withstand;
But still would shrink and shudder at the sound,
When spoke his viewless fiends in anger round.

XX.

And it was rumored that he daily held
Communion strange with monsters of the wood,
Harked to their voices, and their meanings spelled,
And muttered answers which they understood;
That he had filled with wisdom unexcelled,
A cherished serpent of the sesesk's brood, —
Had taught his forky tongue to modulate
The voice of man, and speak impending fate.

XXI.

At length the morn of this stern trial rose,
And mustering towns poured forth their eager trains,
From where wild Pawcatuck's dark water flows,
To where Pawtucket cleaves the sounding plains;
From where Aquidnay's blooming bosom throws
The ocean back, unto the far domains
Of the rude Nipnet, Narraganset's wood
Rendered in eager throngs the multitude.

XXII.

Swarm upon swarm, far dark'ning all the ground,
They gathered, and on Potowomet's plain,
The dusky rabble filled the borders round,
While near the centre stood the warrior train; [abound,
Wild dance their plumes; fierce looks, fierce threats
With war of voices like the murmuring main,
Wherein these words continually prevail: —
"The priest of Chepian grim! —Awanux weak and pale!"

XXIII.

The council formed upon the open glade;
The Sachems sate about the mounting blaze;
Five thousand warriors round that senate made
A dreadful ring, and stared with fixed amaze;
Within the senate, (so the chieftains bade,)
Apart sate Williams, obvious to their gaze;
And off a little, but confronting him,
Appeared the wizard in his hideous trim.

XXIV.

From crown to heel stained black as night he rose,
All naked save his waist and heaving chest;
The sable fox-hide did his loins enclose,
The sable fox-tail formed the nodding crest

Above his inky locks, which, dangling loose,
Half veiled his cheeks, and reached unto his breast;
Around that breast the same black fox's hair
Moved as he breathed, and seemed as growing there.

XXV.

Tall was his form, and in his dexter hand
He bore a barb with deadly venom fraught;
Whilst in his left, supported by a band,
He held a casket, where the rabble thought
A manittoo, awaiting his command,
Coiled in a serpent's folds; and there was nought
That in brave warriors could awaken fright,
Save his dire glance and fascinating might.

XXVI.

For, strange to tell! e'en on the human kind,
That serpent ventured his mysterious charm;
And there were those who thought the subtle mind
Of Chepian's self inspired his winding form.
All sought his omens. — He was aye enshrined,
Through winter's cold, in furs to keep him warm;
And never issued to the open light,
Till famine roused his rage, or prey provoked his might.

XXVII.

Thus, with strange terrors armed, the wizard stood,
And on the casket riveted his eyes,
And whispered for a while in ghastly mood,
Until responses from it seemed to rise
Faintly distinct, whereat the vulgar blood
Stayed its career, and even Sachems wise
Heard with a thrill, — for these dread accents rose:
"Count ye the sands — ye count your pale-faced foes."

XXVIII.

The prophet looked around, the throngs to scan ;
And well he noted by the silence dread
The moment of effect, and then began, —
Beseeching first his fearful demon's aid :
" Chepian, thou power of evil ! dread of man !
God of destruction ! pouring on the head
Of thy opposers, ruins, plagues, and pest, —
Let all thy might thy serpent form invest."

XXIX.

He said ; then turning to the throngs he spoke :
" Brothers ! dark tempests overcast our sky ;
The characters upon Cohannet's rock
Set bounds in vain ; the stranger doth defy
And break our spells ; dread Chepian feels the shock ;
In wrath he sees the approaching deity
Of the pale man — and, in his coming stride,
Feels scathe and death to his dominion wide.

XXX.

" Now hearken, brothers : — 'twas a dismal night,
And in his cave sate Tatoban alone ;
The fading embers shed a dreary light,
And the big owl sent forth a hollow moan ;
The god of tempests sped his rapid flight,
And with his footsteps made the forest groan ;
And whilst he sate, out from the deepest gloom
Did the dread form of awful Chepian come.

XXXI.

" ' Sleeps Tatoban ! ' the awful demon said,
' Sleeps Tatoban ! my Priest, my Prophet sleep !
Does not a pale man my dominion tread ?
With hostile gods has he not crossed the deep ?

Prophet! the spirits of your kindred dead
Already o'er their children's ashes weep; —
Arise! go forth, and by thy serpent quell
The daring stranger, and his gods expel!

XXXII.

"'Hast thou forgot, when, by Cohannet's stream,
To curse the strangers every charm was tried?
How, at your mutterings, the moon's pale beam
Retired from Heaven, and backward rushed the tide?
How I appeared, and, by the embers' gleam,
To the hard rock my lance's point applied,
And scored my mandate — saying to the foe,
Thus far thy gods may come — no further go? *

XXXIII.

"'Rouse, Prophet, rouse! A stranger now doth dare
Pass the charmed limits, and our peace invade!'
He said, and, resting on the casket there,
Melted from sight into the sombre shade:
He chose my serpent for his earthly lair;
Swelled his huge volumes, and inspired his head,
And taught his tongue to speak the future well,
And charms most wise that can the bravest quell.

XXXIV.

"And dar'st thou, stranger, brave his glance of fire?
Dar'st thou confront the terror of his charms?
Confront grim Chepian in the dread attire
Of the great Sesek, whose unearthly arms
Wake fear in Sachems? O, thou fool! retire —
Bear off thy gods; for robed in all their harms
Thou art unsafe. — No power we yield to thee,
Or to thy gods; for Chepian rules by me."

* See note.

XXXVI.

Williams replied, "Thou Priest of Beelzebub!
Chepian, I mean, if that's his better name —
I come not hither to assume thy robe
Pontifical, or emulate thy fame;
Or yet to trouble, with the warrior's club,
Such saints as thou and thy dark demon claim;
For be but peaceful, and I let thee still
Worship thy manit dark, as suits thy will.

XXXVII.

"But here I sit, to prove thee to thy face
A foul impostor, and thy charms a cheat; —
To ope the eyes of a deluded race,
Strangely misled by thine infernal feat,
That in thy foe they confidence may place,
And him, in friendship, as a neighbor greet;
So try thy spells, thine utmost powers essay,
And if I blench, be thine the victor's day."

XXXVIII.

"Die, then!" he said, and down with fury cast
The magic casket, and wide open flew
Its fur-lined cavern. Forth his volumes vast,
Fold following fold, the monstrous serpent drew;
Flashed on his burnished scales, the sunbeams past
Along his flexuous form in many a hue;
Proud of his freedom, o'er the glade he rolled,
And mocked the rainbow in his hues of gold.

XXXIX.

High towered his head; in many an ample fold
He coiled his volumes, spires o'er spires ascending
And lessening as they rose and inward rolled;
His rustling scales, their various colors blending,

Surpassed the hues of diamond and of gold ;
Till, from the top pyramidal extending,
Swam forth on crooked neck his eyes of flame,
Rang his sharp buzz, and on he slowly came.

XL.

Shouted the crowds, as they beheld him rise,
" The manittoo ! The manittoo ! " they cried.
In sooth, their demon, from his burning eyes,
Seemed looking forth, and his unlabored glide
Scarce earthly seemed, the while his glistering dyes
In mingling brilliance changed and multiplied,
And scarce the curves that moved him did untwist ;
But o'er them floating, like a globe of mist,

XLI.

His quivering rattles buzzed. With curious eyes,
Williams beheld him gradually advance,
Then grasped a wand, then paused with fixed surprise,
To see the gorgeous radiance, moving, glance
The hues of heaven ; — to see, now sink, now rise,
His bending spires, — his wavering colors dance ;
And at each change of that deep thrilling hum
The motions change — the colors go and come.

XLII.

An odor, strange though not offensive, spread
About him, as he near and nearer drew ;
But, piercing, keen, it filled our Founder's head,
Involved his brain, and passed his senses through ;
Entranced he sate, while round him rose and played
Celestial hues, and music strange and new ; —
The heavens, the earth, to various radiance turned,
And in a maze of mingling colors burned.

XLIII.

The juggling sesek vanished from his sight;
No alien object did his trance confuse;
So rang the hum, so danced the colors bright,
The hues seemed music, and the music hues;
Still swelled the sounds, still livelier flashed the light;
His limbs obedience to his will refuse;
He strove to rise, he yielded to affright,
Like one be-nightmared in the dreams of night.

XLIV.

"Whence this dread power that steals my strength away?
This creeping torpor, this Lethean dew?
This strange wild rapture mingling with dismay?
Ye dangerous beauties! vanish from my view;
Creatures of Evil, come ye to betray
One victim more, and his sad soul subdue
Unto the Tempter, whose infernal spell
Brought death to Eden, and gave joy to hell?

XLV.

"And shall my labors thus inglorious end?
Shall my defeat give him a triumph new?"
The thought was fire, and did new vigor lend;
Back rushed his soul through every avenue.
A seeming cloud did from his brain ascend,
The magic colors vanished from his view;
And at his feet, in many a supple sweep,
The odious reptile coiled him for the leap.

XLVI.

Swift darts the tongue, the horrid jaws unfold; —
Williams beheld — struck — cleft the head away:
In many a loosening coil the body rolled,
Collapsed, grew still, and there extended lay,

A headless reptile ; — all its hues of gold
And diamond deadened in its life's decay ;
Whilst the foiled wizard looked upon the slain,
And choked and yelled, then choked with rage again.

XLVII.

The crowds looked on 'twixt terror and surprise ;
They gazed — they gaped with fixed astonishment ;
Their serpent manit braved — ay, slaughtered lies !
Is it Awanux that is prevalent ?
But when they gave full credence to their eyes,
Wild wondering clamors through the masses went,
Which closed in shouts that through the forest rolled,
" The wizard conquered by the Yengee bold ! "

XLVIII.

Ill could that juggler a white victor brook,
And Hell's dark passions boiled through all his blood ;
His eyes shot fire, and from his belt he took
His deadly dart, — and in stern silence viewed
Its poisoned barb, whose short and horrid crook
The jaws of seseks armed, — jaws all imbued
With the keen venom gathered from the fangs
Of such as died by self-inflicted pangs.

XLIX.

Nothing he spake, but with a hideous yell,
Raised his long dart, and, backward as he bent,
From starting eye-balls shot the light of Hell ;
At Williams' breast the vengeful glance was sent,
But as his muscles did the barb impel,
Red Waban's grasp obstructed their descent ; —
On earth the weapon falls and pants for blood ;
The lifted arm still threatening vengeance stood.

L.

Miantonomi, who the scene surveyed,
Too long had now his rising wrath concealed;
A mighty lance his better hand displayed,
And well he knew its haft of length to wield;
Backward its hilt the angry Sachem swayed,
And 'neath its stroke the staggering wizard reeled;
Till from a storm of blows he cringing fled,
And madly howling through the forest sped.

LI.

"Go, Priest of Chepian, go!" the Sachem said,
"Thy dreams are false — thy charms are all a cheat;
Go to thy manit — tell him that his aid
Has failed thee once, and thou art sorely beat.
Us have thy prophecies too long betrayed,
And vacant in the council is thy seat.
When aid we need, we will to him apply
Who conquers thee, and slays thy deity."

LII.

A while the throngs sate as in deep amaze —
A while 'twas doubtful what might be their mood;
At length wild shoutings they began to raise; —
One transport filled the total multitude;
Their Sachem's boldness cheerly did they praise,
For long had they with dread the wizard viewed;
Nor less admired our Founder's courage true,
Which did that juggler and his charms subdue.

LIII.

Then rose Canonicus, that shrewd old chief;
"Brother!" he said, "much glory hast thou won;
Thy deeds this day will scantly gain belief
With warriors red, from rise to set of sun:

Great Chepian's priest, within a moment brief,
Thou, with thy fearlessness, hast overdone ;
And thou art greater than his manits are, —
For they were vanquished in the combat fair.

LIV.

" Brother ! we take thy calumet of peace,
And throw the hatchet into quiet shade ;
The Wampanoag's terrors may surcease,
And thou mayst plant on Seekonk's eastern glade ;
But hearken, brother ! — better far would please
Thy council fire if by Mooshausick made ;
But pass we that ; for well our brother knows
To live our friend surrounded by our foes.

LV.

" Brother ! thou wilt our belt of friendship take,
And for us win the kindness of the White,
That when we war against the Pequot make,
His hands may aid us, and his counsels light ; —
His thunders speak and all the forests shake, —
His lightnings flash and spread a wild affright
Through town and fortress, whereso'er we go,
Till not a Pequot lives to tell his nation's woe.

LVI.

" Brother ! we grant thee quiet neighborhood, —
The tree of peace o'ershadows thee and me ;
And thou mayst hunt in Narraganset's wood,
And catch the fish that in our waters be ;
But thou must still promote the red man's good,
Keep bright his belt, and make thy counsels free
When danger darkens ; — and if this be done,
I am thy father, thou shalt be my son."

LVII.

Scarce need I say, Sire Williams cheerly gave
The pipe he bore and took the friendly belt;
That thanks he tendered to the Sachems brave;
That what he uttered he as deeply felt;
That he repeated each assurance grave
Of friendly favors, whilst he near them dwelt;
Nor pause I, now, the customs to describe,
By which the truce was honored by the tribe.

LVIII.

He took the Sachem's friendly calumet,
Then scattered wampum mid the warriors all;
On Miantonomi's lofty brow he set,
Round waving plumes, the jeweled coronal;
The scarlet coat the elder potentate
Most trimly graced, and gave delight withal;
Then ribbons gave he, various their hue,
To counsellors and Keenomps, bold and true.

LIX.

His mission finished, Father Williams sped,
With Waban guiding, through the forest lone;
Nor cold nor hunger did he longer dread,
Or bore them cheerly now, his object won;
Quickly to Haup did he the thickets thread —
To Haup, so well to Pilgrim Father known —
And found that Sachem, mid his warriors stern,
Alarmed, but hoping still his safe return.

LX.

Gladly he heard from Waban's faithful tongue
Sire Williams' speeches and the answers given,
And wildly shouted all that warrior throng,
To learn the dire enchanter's spell was riven;

And wilder shouts the echoing vales prolong,
To hear that priest was from the council driven;
"The tree of peace" they cried, "will bloom again,
The wizard's banished, and his manit slain."

LXI.

Then to the elder chief our Father gave
The Narraganset friendly calumet;
And it was pleasant to behold the grave
And stern old Sachem, whilst his eyes were wet
With tears of gratitude; — he could outbrave
The stake's grim tortures, and could smiling sit
Amid surrounding foes; yet kindness could
Subdue to tears this "stoic of the wood."

LXII.

He clasped our Father by the hand and led
Him up, in silence, to the mountain's crown;
And there, from snow-capt outlook at its head,
They gazed o'er bay and isle and forest brown.
It seemed a summer's eve in winter bred;
The sun in ruddy gold was going down,
And calm and far the expanded waters lay,
Clad in the glory of the dying day.

LXIII.

There stretched Aquidnay tow'rd the ocean blue,
In virgin wildness still of isles the queen;
Her forests glimmered with the western hue,
Her vales and banks were decked with cedars green,
And southward far her swelling bosom drew
Its lessening contours, in the distance seen; —
Till, wavering indistinctly, in the gray
Encroaching sea-mists they were hid away.

LXIV.

Beneath his feet, Aquidnay's north extreme
Displayed a cove, begemmed with islets gay;
Its silvery surface caught the setting beam,
Where'er the op'ning hemlocks gave it way;
Young nature there, tranced in her earliest dream,
Did all her whims in vital forms array;
Her feathered tribes round beak and headland glide,
Her scaly broods leap from the glassy tide.

LXV.

Out from Aquidnay tow'rd the setting sun,
Spread the calm waters like a sea of gold
Studded with isles, till Narraganset dun
Fringed the far west, and cape and headland bold,
With forest shagged, cast their huge shadows down,
And glassed them in the wave; while silence old
Resumed her reign, save that by times did rise,
On Williams' ears, the sea-birds' jangling cries.

LXVI.

Or the lone fowler, in his light canoe,
Round jutting point all warily did glide,
And pause awhile to watch, with steadfast view,
Where the long-diving loon might break the tide;
Then, noiseless, near the myriad seafowl drew,
And, baffled, saw them scur, with clangor wide,
Up from the foamy flood, and, mounting high,
Darken the day, and seek another sky.

LXVII.

Then looking north, from far could he behold,
Bright bursting from his source through forests dun,
Like liquid silver, broad Cohannet rolled
Tow'rd parent ocean; — there his currents run

Embrowned by fringing woods ; — here molten gold,
Gleaming and glittering in the setting sun,
They glance by Haup — there, eastward as they pour,
They cleave Aqiudnay from Pocasset's shore.

LXVIII.

That rude Pocasset — which, when Williams saw
From towering Haup, did one broad forest shew ;
Here, steep o'er steep, there, leaving Nature's law,
Hill, glade, and swamp, — presenting to the view
So mad a maze, that there, if hunter draw
His sounding bow, and but a space pursue
The wounded deer, he finds his guidance fail,
And lost, halloos through tangled brake and dale.

LXIX.

Yet the rude wigwams smoked from many a glade,
Where near the shore the oaks were branching wide,
Where future gardens might invite the spade,
Or furrowing plough the fertile glebe divide,
And where, still south, the hills retiring made
More ample meadows by the glassy tide ;
Till far Seaconnet showed her rim of rock,
Whereon the ocean's rolling billows broke.

LXX.

But on Aquidnay dwelt our Founder's gaze,
Enraptured still. " Would Seekonk's mead compare
With yon wild Eden ? " While he thus delays,
The old chief's hand does on his bosom bear,
As he explains : " Another sachem sways
The isle of peace. All Haup's dominions are [choose ;
Stretched tow'rd the God of frost — look there and
All thou hast won, and well a part mayst use."

LXXI.

Turned by the words that gently woke his ears,
Before his eyes a boundless forest lay ;
The mossy giants of a thousand years,
O'er hill and plain their mighty arms display ;
Mound after mound, far lessening north, appears,
Till in blue haze they seem to melt away ;
Here Seekonk wedded with Mooshausick beamed,
And there Cohannet's liquid silver gleamed.

LXXII.

Here Kikimuet left his woodland height,
Bright in the clear, or dark beneath the shade ;
There Sowams gleamed, — if names the muse aright,
Till in the forest far his glories fade ;
While here and there, rose curling on his sight
The village smokes of many a sheltered glade ;
And, nearer, clustered at the mountain's base,
The foremost town of Pokanoket's race.

LXXIII.

Embosomed there in massy shades it stood ;
Its frequent voices, up the silent steep,
Came on our Founder's ear ; — in cheerful mood,
The tones of childhood shrill, and manhood deep,
Told him what sports, what toils were there pursued ;
Or, wild and clear, the melody would sweep
Of girlish voices, warbling plaintive strains,
Half chant, half music, over woods and plains.

LXXIV.

Ah ! how more lovely than the silence hushed,
That lists in horror for the foeman's tread !
A tender joy our Father's bosom flushed, —
The work was his that had these blessings spread ;

The storm, that else had o'er the nation rushed,
Had by his sufferings and his toils been stayed;
And as he mused, his hand the Sachem pressed,
For like emotions swelled his rugged breast.

LXXV.

"And oh!" he cried, "what can the Sachem do?
How can he give to Winiams recompense?
Our foes were many, and our warriors few,
But Winiams came, and he was our defence;
Go, brother, plant — go, plant our forest through —
All hast thou won by thy benevolence;
All hast thou saved from ruthless enemies,
Take what thou wilt, and take what best may please."

LXXVI.

Our Father answered — "give me bounds and deeds —
No lands I take but such as parchment names;
To future ages will I leave no seeds
To yield a harvest of discordant claims;
If name I must, I name fair Seekonk's meads —
What first I craved still satisfies my aims;
These and the friendship of my neighbors are
Reward too generous for my toil and care."

LXXVII.

"My brother gives with palm expanded wide,"
The Sachem said, "but with a closing hand
Our gifts are half received and half denied;
Ha! was he born in the white stranger's land?
My brother's corn shall wave by Seekonk's tide —
My brother's town shall on its margin stand;
And on the deer-skin, tested by my bow,
My painted voice shall talk, and to far ages go."

LXXVIII.

While thus they spake, the sun declining low,
In Narraganset's shades, half veiled his light;
On rapid pinions did the dark winged crow
And broad plumed eagle speed their homeward flight;
Warned by the signs, the twain, descending slow,
In converse grave, pass down the wooded height;
And, in the Sachem's sylvan palace, share
Respite from hunger, toil, and present care.

CANTO SIXTH.

[SCENE. Seekonk's Mead, or Place of the First Settlement.]

THE winds of March o'er Narraganset's bay [white;
Move in their strength — the waves with foam are
O'er Seekonk's tide the tossing branches play,
The woods roar o'er resounding plain and height;
'Twixt sailing clouds, the sun's inconstant ray
But glances on the scene — then fades from sight;
The frequent showers dash from the passing clouds;
The hills are peeping through their wintry shrouds.

II.

Dissolving snows each downward channel fill,
Each swollen brook a foaming torrent brawls,
Old Seekonk murmurs, and from every hill
Answer aloud the coming waterfalls;
Deep-voiced Pawtucket thunders louder still, —
To dark Mooshausick joyously he calls,
Who breaks his bondage, and through forests brown
Murmurs the hoarse response and rolls his tribute down.

III.

But hark! that sound, above the cataracts
And hollow winds in this wild solitude,
Seems passing strange. — Who with the laboring axe,
On Seekonk's eastern marge, invades the wood?
Stroke follows stroke; — some sturdy hind attacks
Yon ancient groves, which from their birth have stood
Unmarred by steel, and, startled at the sound,
The wild deer snuffs the gales, — then, with a bound,

IV.

Vaults o'er the thickets, and down yonder glen
His antlers vanish; on yon shaggy height
Sits the lone wolf, half-peering from his den,
And howls regardless of the morning light;
Unwonted sounds and a strange denizen
Vex his repose; soon, cowering with affright,
He shrinks away, for with a crackling sound,
Yon hemlock bows and thunders to the ground.

V.

Who on the prostrate trunk has risen now,
And does with cleaving steel the blows renew?
Broad is the beaver on his manly brow,
His mantle gray, his hosen azure blue;
His feet are dripping with dissolving snow,
His garments sated with the morning dew; —
Our Founder is he, and, though changed by long
And grievous suffering, steadfast still and strong.

VI.

Hard by yon little fountain clear and sheen,
Whose swollen streamlet murmurs down the glade,
Where groves of hemlock and of cedars green
Oppose to northern storms a barricade,
Stands the first mansion of his rude demesne,
A slender wigwam by red Waban made;
Their common shelter from the wintry blast;
And place of rest when daily toils are past.

VII.

Yet from the storm he seldom shrinks away,
With his own hands he labors now to rear
A mansion, where his wife and children may,
In happier days, partake the social cheer;

And unrelenting bigot ne'er essay
To make the free-born spirit quail with fear
At threat of scourge, or banishment or death,
For free belief, the soul's sustaining breath.

VIII.

Day after day does he his toil renew;
From dawn till dark still doth his axe resound,
And falling cedars still the valley strew,
Or cumber with their trunks the littered ground;
The solid beams and rafters does he hew,
Or labors hard to roll or heave them round;
Or squares their sides, or shapes the joints aright
To match their fellows and the whole unite.

IX.

The beams now hewn, he frames the building square,
Each joint adjusting to its counterpart —
Tier over tier with labor does he bear,
Timber on timber closes every part,
Except where door or lattice to the air
A passage yields, — and from the walls now start
The rafters, matted over and between, —
Against the storm and cold, — with rushes green.

X.

Long did this task his patient cares engage,
'Twas labor strange to hands like his, I ween,
That had far oftener turned the sacred page
Than hewed the trunk or delved the grassy green;
But toils like these gave honors to the sage;
The axe and spade in no one's hands are mean,
And least of all in thine, that toiled to clear
The mind's free march — Illustrious Pioneer!

XI.

His cottage finished, he proceeds to rear
A strong rude paling round that verdant glade
His field and garden soon will flourish there,
And wild marauders may their fruits invade;
His maize may be a banquet for the bear,
And herds of deer may on his herbage tread;
But little thinks he that intruders worse
Than these will enter and his labors curse.

XII.

Now milder spring ushers its April showers,
And up fair Seekonk woos the southern breeze;
The birds are singing in their woodland bowers,
Green grows the ground and budding are the trees
The purple violets and wild strawberry flowers
Invite the visits of the murmuring bees;
And down the glade the twittering swallow slips,
And in the stream her nimble pinions dips.

XIII.

And now, with vigor and redoubled haste,
Our Founder delves to plant the foodful maize;
He turns the glebe, does nature's rankness waste,
The boscage burn, and noxious brambles raze;
Then o'er the seed, on earth's brown bosom placed,
The fertile mould with careful hand he lays;
Nor yet content, — still labors, other whiles,
The glade to gladden with a garden's smiles.

XIV.

Then in the woods he carved the deep alcove,
And led the climbing vines from tree to tree;
But near the cottage left the birchen grove,
Its tassels waving in the breezes free;

While o'er the stream their boughs the cedars wove,
Where wound a walk adown the murmuring lea ;
And gadding vines embowered the fount's bright flow
'Twixt banks of vernal flowers in bloom below.

XV.

Ne'er hatchet touched the overhanging bough,
Whereon the robin built her wonted nest ;
About the borders did the wild rose grow,
For there the thrush might soothe her brood to rest ;
Nor would he banish from her dwelling low
The long-eared rabbit, but her young caressed ;
Fed from his hand they gambolled in the grove,
Caressed our Sire in turn, and mimicked human love.

XVI.

And these long toils had Waban's faithful aid ;
His twanging bow announced the early dawn ;
Boldly he pushed into the deepest shade,
Or scanned the tracks upon the dewy lawn ;
With lusty arms he grappled on the glade
The growling bear, or caught the bounding fawn,
Or, with sure arrow and resounding bow,
Brought down the turkey from her lofty bough.

XVII.

Sometimes he would the river's bed explore,
Where with sure grasp the slippery eels he caught ;
Sometimes he delved along the sandy shore,
And to the lodge the shelly tribute brought ;
And ever shared he with his Sagamore,
(For so to call our Founder he was taught.)
The produce of his toils ; and 'twas his care
To parch the maize and spread the frugal fare.

XVIII.

So for a while they two in quietude,
With hopes auspicious, urged their task along, —
Lighter of heart; though Williams still would brood,
And inly marvel, o'er the missing throng
Of friendly Indians, issuing from the wood
To greet him with "What-Cheer" in voices strong;
And oft would wonder if perchance a vain
Illusion had beguiled his troubled brain.

XIX.

But omens dark and dire appeared at last:
The grim Pawaw had seen the mansion rise, —
Had from Mooshausick's highlands often cast
On the advancing work his watchful eyes;
And often, wafted on the passing blast,
Our Sire had heard that wizard's warning cries: —
Yet hoped that, baffled and chastised, his pride,
And courage too, had with his serpent died.

XX.

Vain hope! The close had scarce been made secure,
Ere Seekonk's western marge was blazing bright,
And decked with horns, and furs, and paints impure,
The prophet with a comrade danced all night
Around the flame, and howling, did adjure
His manittoo that most abhorred the light
To give him aid, and, by or force or fraud,
His hated neighbor drive once more abroad.

XXI.

War! war! he threatened:—and when morning came,—
Though quenched the fire,—upon the margin he,
All trim for strife, bent his gigantic frame
O'er Seekonk's severing flow, and toward the lea

Shook his ensanguined barb and smote the stream,
And muttered curses numbering three times three ;
Then bent his bow, and sent across the flood
Darts armed with serpents' fangs and red with blood.

XXII.

And brandishing his blade, he jeering said,
That vengeance gave it eyes and appetite,
It soon would eat, but eat in silence dread ;
That if the red men all were turning white,
He'd seek the white men that were turning red ;
The path was open, and his foot was light ;
The Shawmut* hunters would with greedy ear
Hear in what covert couched their stricken deer.

XXIII.

Then, with a hideous yell that rent the skies,
He sternly turned and tow'rd Mooshausick flew.
Waban who watched the scene with blazing eyes,
Swift answer gave in shouts of valor true.
From threats like these our Sire might harm surmise,
But that he deemed the wily wizard knew
How heavy was Miantinomi's spear,
And, if 'twere needful, might be made to fear.

XXIV.

But, after this portentous morn, scarce sun
Looked on that glade, but brought them fresh alarms ;
If Waban delved the shores or walked thereon,
Missiles around him flew from hidden arms ;
His snares were plundered ere the morning shone,
Clubs smeared with blood and threatening deadly harms
Lay in his path, and voices strangely broke
From viewless forms on shrub, or tree, or rock.

* The Indian name for Boston.

XXV.

Oft from the vacant air came bitter jeer
In gibberish strange, and oft from under ground
A hellish mockery smote the hunter's ear,
And he would start; but if he glanced around
And Williams saw, he banished every fear;
For well he knew his Sachem could confound
Such diabolic phantoms, — he who slew,
In Potowomet's glade, the serpent manittoo.

XXVI.

Then taking courage he would seek the brake,
Cull the straight haft, and arm it with the bone
Or tooth of beaver, and the plumage take
From Neyhom wild to wing and guide it on
Straight to its mark, or with nice handling make
Of sinewy deer the bowstring tough, or hone
His glittering scalping-knife, and grimly feel
How sharp its point, how keen its edge of steel.

XXVII.

At length, no longer heedful of disguise,
Upon the opposing bank the wizard stood,
With meet compeer — both armed; their battle cries
And challenge fired brave Waban's martial blood;
Scorning all counsel, to the marge he flies,
And shoots his arrows o'er the severing flood;
To taunts and jeers his bow alone replies,
And soon their hostile missiles span the skies.

XXVIII.

From tree to tree the champions fly and fight,
Driving or driven from the sheltering screen,
Each change, each movement, yielding to the sight
Their swarthy members through the foliage green;

Whereat their arrows follow, flight on flight,
With hideous yells at every pause between;
Now down the stream — now at the tumbling falls,
The petty battle raves, and wrath to vengeance calls.

XXIX.

Hour after hour thus raged the doubtful fight,
Until the combatants their shafts had spent;
Then to the river's marge in peaceful plight,
Bearing the pipe with fumes all redolent,
The fraudful wizard came, as to invite
Across the stream to cheer quite innocent
And friendly league a neighbor and a friend;
"Come, let the pipe," he said, "the battle end.

XXX.

"Waban is brave, and Tatoban is brave;
Hereafter let us live as neighbors kind,
And let thy arrows sleep; no more shall rave
This knife and hatchet; Tatoban was blind!"
"Go!" Waban cried, "thou and thy dastard slave!
Go trap the Neyhom, or the foolish hind;
But thinkest thou into thy open snare,
To lure the cunning fox, and slay him there?"

XXXI.

Thus closed the strife that day; another came,
And all was peace; another sun and still
Another rose and set, and still the same
Unbroken peace — no threatening sign of ill:
Quite undisturbed red Waban trapped his game
Or delved the shore — no foe appeared; until
Our Sire believed that he might safely bless
His weary hours with earth's best happiness.

XXXII.

Waban, his only counsellor and friend,
Warrior and subject in this lone domain,
Did now the summons of his chief attend,
And, questioned by him, straightway answered plain.
"Waban," said Williams, "do our battles end?
Is the war over — have we peace again?
No more on yonder bank the prophet stands
And wings his darts or whirls his blazing brands."

XXXIII.

Waban replied, "Did ever noon-day light
On midnight break? Did ever tempest shed,
Just as it gathered, radiance mild and bright?
Heard not my Sachem what the prophet said, —
That if the red men were all turning white,
He'd seek such white men as were turning red?
Perchance he goes, and Waban has a fear
That to his cunning speech they'll lend an ear."

XXXIV.

"Waban, fear not; my pale-faced brethren are
All Christians, or at least would such be thought;
And dost thou think that Beelzebub, how fair
Soe'er his speech may be, could move them aught
Against their brother? It is better far, —
If it be true such vengeance he have sought, —
Than that he lurk among the bushes here,
To fill our days with care and nights with fear.

XXXV.

"But, Waban, I have now a task for thee; —
Think not of him; but let thy mind be here.
Whilst snows o'erspread the earth and ice the sea,
I parted from my wife and children dear;

'Twas stormy night, the hunter sheltered me,
And gave me in his lodge abundant cheer;
Then tow'rd the rising sun for me he sped,
And saw the home from which the wanderer fled.

XXXVI.

"There too he saw his little children play,
And the white hand which gave the blanket red;
But now that gloomy time seems far away,
For much has happened, many a moon has sped;
The lodge is built, the garden smiling gay; —
Will the swift foot once more the forest thread,
And guide the children and the snow-white hand,
With watchful tendance, to this distant land?"

XXXVII.

Waban replied: "The nimble-foot will go; —
But a gaunt wolf may haunt the hunter's way,
And he will whet his darts, and string his bow,
And gird his loins as for the battle fray;
The Priest of Chepian ne'er forgets a foe; —
His vengeance lasts until a bloody day
Doth feed the crows, or still a bloodier night
Gives the gaunt wolf a feast ere dawning light."

XXXVIII.

"God is our trust!" our pious Founder said,
"Arm, and go forth confiding in his might;
So far as e'er an exile's foot dare tread
The ground forbidden him, thy sachem white
Will go to meet thee; and when morn has shed
Five times from eastern skies her golden light,
Will wait thee and his wife and children dear,
Hidden in Salem woods till thou appear."

XXXIX.

Our Founder then the brief epistle traced,
Entreating first that some kind Salem friend,
To aid his little Israel through the waste,
Would for a while two well-trained palfreys lend ;
Then to his wife, with kind expression graced,
Did meet directions for her guidance send ;
Called her from Egypt, bade her cheerly dare
The desert pass, and find her Canaan there.

XL.

The morrow dawned, and Waban stood prepared ;
His knife well sharpened and his bow well strung —
He waited only till his chief declared
His purpose full ; then on his mantle flung,
Girded his loins, his brawny arms he bared,
And lightly through the rattling thickets sprung ;
And soon the thunderings of the partridge tell
Where bounds his distant foot from dell to dell.

CANTO SEVENTH.

[SCENES. Seekonk's Mead—The Wilderness—Salem—The Wilderness—The Night at the Cavern—The New Home.]

MUCH Williams dreaded that dark priest, I ween,
Albeit he hid his fears from Waban's eyes;
His threat'ning arrows and his savage mien
Would often now in midnight dreams arise;
And, rising, bring of blood a woful scene —
His Mary pale—his children's wailing cries;
And he would start, aud marvel how a dream,
Delirium's thought, should so substantial seem.

II.

If in the lonely wilds, by evening dim,
That vengeful savage should the path waylay
Of all the dearest earth contained for him,
Those jewels of the heart, what power could stay
His thirst for blood — his fury wild and grim
As is the tiger's bounding on his prey?
Oft came obtrusive this appalling thought —
He shook it off — still it returned unsought.

III.

Not long he brooks this torturing delay,
But soon tow'rd Salem through the forest goes,
Nor will the Muse go with him on his way,
And sing in horrid shades each night's repose,
Until she, shuddering, mingle with her lay,
And seem herself to bear her hero's woes;
Let it suffice that on the third day's dawn,
He gazed from Salem woods on Salem town.

IV.

He saw the cottage he must tread no more,
And sighed that man should be so stern to man;
Two harnessed palfreys stood beside the door,
And by the windows busy movement ran;
Then did his eyes the village downs explore,
Ere yet the labors of the day began;
But all still slept, save where the watch-dog bayed,
Or lowed the kine and cropt the dewy glade.

V.

And many a field new traces of the plough,
And many a roof its recent structure showed,
And in the harbor many a sable prow,
Rocked by the billows, at her anchor rode;
And, ah! he saw (to him no temple now)
The lowly house where erst in prayer he bowed,
And strove to lead his little flock to Heaven;
His flock no more, — with strifes now sorely riven.

VI.

He turned his eyes again to that dear spot
Where, by the door, the waiting palfreys stood:
There, laden now, they bore what Mary thought
The tender exiles, in the lonely wood,
Would need or miss the most, and likewise aught
That would most cheer or comfort their abode;
With useful household wares, securely piled,
But cumbersome for journeying through the wild.

VII.

He saw red Waban take each palfrey's rein,
And slowly walk the laden beasts before;
He saw his Mary, with her little train
Of blooming children, issue from the door;

He saw her loving neighbors them detain
The Almighty's blessing on them to implore,
And heard the farewell hymn, a pensive strain
Of mingled voices as they trod the plain.

VIII.

Pleasant it was, and mournful was it too,
To see the matron leading by the hand,
From all their joys to toils and dangers new,
That innocent and happy infant band;
For, hand in hand, did they their way pursue,
With childish wonder, toward the distant land;—
As little witting of the ills that wait,
As that their labors were to found a State.

IX.

Soon Waban passed him where concealed he stood,
And slowly led his docile charge along;
Then Mary stept into the dusky wood,
Still guiding, as she came, the prattling throng;
No longer viewless he his darlings viewed,
But, wild with rapture, from the thicket sprung:
"Oh, father! father!" burst the children's cry,
And Mary claspt him in her ecstacy.

X.

But short the transport — soon must they resume
The weary march, and from the dawning gray
Hour after hour, to pensive evening's gloom,
Through the lone forest wend their devious way;
O'er river, vale, and steep, through brake and broom,
And rough ravine, with aching steps they stray;
The father's arms oft bore the lovely weight,
Or on the palfrey's back the weariest sate.

XI.

And thus they past o'er many a rapid flow,
Climbed many a hill — through many a valley wound,
While wary Waban moved before them slow,
And for their feet the smoothest pathway found ;
River and fen and miry waste and low,
The floods had swollen to their utmost bound ;
Unbridged by frost, no passage do they show,
And far about the anxious wanderers go.

XII.

The sun from middle skies now downward bent
His course, and for a while on lofty ground
They rested, and abroad their glances sent
Far o'er the sea of forest that embrowned
The landscape. The overarching firmament,
The woody waste enclaspt with azure round,
And yon bright sun, yon eagle soaring high,
And yon lone wigwam's smoke, are all that cheer the eye.

XIII.

At times the eagle's scream trills from on high,
At times the pecker taps the mouldering bough,
Or the far raven wakes her boding cry, —
All else is hushed the vast expanses through :
And, ah ! they feel in the immensity
Of pathless wilds, around them and below,
As in mid-ocean feels some shipwrecked crew,
Borne wandering onward in the frail canoe.

XIV.

And something was there in red Waban's mien,
Which all the morn had drawn our Founder's eyes ;
For still he spake not, and was often seen
To bend his ear, or start as with surprise ;

And now he stood, and, through the thicket's screen,
The shadowy prospect seemed to scrutinize,
Then paused, unmoving, till a far-off howl
Did, with long echoes, through the stillness roll.

XV.

It seemed a wolf's, but Waban's practised ear
Could well the language of the forest tell;
Again he paused, till from the distance drear,
A faint response in dying cadence fell;
Then spake in haste; — "Does not my sachem hear
The voice of vengeance in the breezes swell?
Come! Let us hasten to some friendly town,
For murder tracks us through the forest brown!

XVI.

"Comrade to comrade calls! — the demon's priest
Is on our trail!"— No more the red man spoke;
And this in Narraganset's tongue exprest,
To Mary nothing told, save as the look
And earnest gesture may have stirred her breast
With vague alarm. — But these she soon mistook
As native to him in his wonted mood,
And seemed confirmed as she our Founder viewed.

XVII.

He, in like speech, thus to his faithful guide: —
"Waban, be calm! wake not in bosoms frail
A groundless fear; the tokens may have lied;
Some other wolf may be upon our trail."
"Waban was hunted," quickly he replied,
"Far tow'rd the white man's town through yonder vale;
When there, the priest oft in his pathway stept,
And watched the wigwam where the white hand slept."

XVIII.

Sire Williams shuddered thus to realize
What he had hoped was but his fancy's fear;
But yet he quelled each symptom of surprise,
And thus to Waban: "Brother, be your ear
Quick as the beaver's, and your searching eyes
Like to the eagle's, and, the foeman near,
Be your heart bolder than the panther's, when
He slays the growling bear and drags him to his den."

XIX.

They left the steep, and, o'er the woodland plain,
Passed with all speed the tender group could make;
They ford the rivers, and their course maintain
Through ancient groves, where, bare of broom and brake,
The lurking foe might scant concealment gain;
Waban still moved before, and nothing spake;
His rapid glance scanned every thicket near,
And when he paused he bent the listening ear.

XX.

Hour after hour the hunter thus did go,
His eyes still roving and his ears still spread;
His was a spectre's glide; — but toiling slow,
The lagging group pursued with faltering tread.
At last he paused beneath a birchen bough,
Where the dense alders formed a barricade,
And there awaited them. — With anxious breast
Williams approached, and thus his guide addrest:

XXI.

"Sees not my brother that the shadows grow
Fast tow'rd the east, and that the forest brown
Soon hides the sun? — then whither does he go
To rest in safety till the morrow's dawn."

Waban replied, "O'er yonder distant brow,
Smokes in the vale Neponset's peopled town;
Thy red friends there will thee in safety keep,
There may the white hand and the children sleep."

XXII.

As thus he spake, across their pathway sped
The startled partridge on her whirring wings;
An arrow glanced — it grazed the hunter's head,
And the shrill forest with the bowstring rings;
Red Waban's eyes flash fire, and anger dread
Flames in his blood, and every muscle strings;
He stooped to mark where twanged that hostile bow,
Then sprang from tree to tree, to reach the foe.

XXIII.

But ere he gained the purposed point, or viewed
The fell assassin, the dry fagots' crash,
The waving coppice, and re-echoing wood,
And sounding footfalls down the brakes that dash,
Told him how vainly he his foe pursued,
Or that pursuit were dangerously rash;
And turning slowly he retraced his track,
As his foiled leap the lion measures back.

XXIV.

The matron trembled, at the scene dismayed,
For she had marked that hostile arrow's flight,
And Williams' glance, and Waban's mien betrayed
That instant peril did their fears excite;
And yet no frantic shrieks her acts degrade;
A mother's cares did every thought invite;
And o'er the little scions of her blood
She stretched her arms' frail fence, and trembling stood.

XXV.

Calmer in bearing but with equal dread,
The anxious father viewed the threatening harm ;
And, under God, what was there now to aid,
Save his own firmness and red Waban's arm ?
Behind — before — a dreary forest spread ;
Far was Neponset ; here the dire alarm
Of lurking savage ; whilst the gathering night
Still added horror to a dubious flight.

XXVI.

He paused a moment, and his means forlorn,
To guard the onward march, he thus arrayed :
The palfreys shielded by the burdens borne,
On either side the moving group, were led,
This by himself, that by his eldest born,
Whilst nimble Waban scoured the threatening shade,
And, keeping wary watch where'er he ran,
Now fenced their flanks, now pioneered their van.

XXVII.

Like as the eagle, — when, from airy rest
She wards her callow young with watchful eye,
And sees the thickets move, by footsteps prest
Within the precinct of her nursery, —
Wheels first on outstretched pinions round her nest,
Searching below, then darts into the sky
For far espial, — gathering every sound, —
And soars aloft or sails along the ground ;

XXVIII.

So Waban watched and ran, while, moving slow,
The anxious father aids the group along.
In dreadful silence sleeps the forest now,
Hushed is the prattling of each infant's tongue ;

No sound is there, save that of footsteps low,
Or of the breeze that sighs the leaves among,
Or palfrey's tramp — whose hoofs, with iron shod,
Now clink on rocks, now deaden on the sod.

XXIX.

The sun at last sunk in the western shade,
And the thick forest cast a darker frown,
And now they paused amid an open glade,
More than a bow-shot from the thickets brown;
Then Father Williams to the hunter said,
"Where! where! O Waban, is Neponset's town?"
And Waban answered, "Full one-half a sleep
This march requires to bring us to its steep."

XXX.

"Then here we rest, to take whate'er may come,"
Our Founder said, "and do you all prepare
To tread the realms that lie beyond the tomb;
There are no foes or persecutors there,
To drive the guiltless forth, and bid them roam
In savage wilds; yet do not quite despair;
When comes the foe, — and come he doubtless will,
Brother! we must be firm — if needful, we must kill!"

XXXI.

"Waban is firm," the hunter said, and smote
His naked breast, and raised his stature high;
"Yet hear the red man still; — not far remote
Is Waban's rock, where he is wont to lie
When the far-striding moose has tired his foot,
And night comes down, and tempests rule the sky;
There may we rest; the foe's approach is hard
But by one pass, and that will Waban guard."

XXXII.

The place they sought ; — 'twas down a rocky dell,
Where scarce the palfreys found a footing sure,
Where deeper darkness from the forest fell,
And thicker boscage did the pass immure ;
At last, before them, like a citadel,
Rose a tall rock, whose frowning frontals lower
Over a narrow lea, with brambles dense
On either side like an impervious fence.

XXXIII.

" Here," said the red man, (as he raised a mass
Of vines that clustered down the rock's descent,)
" Here's Waban's cavern, here is ample space
For thee and thine ; in this rude tenement
Ten hunters oft have found their biding place,
Nor in it felt themselves too closely pent ;
Waban will now below the opening raise,
In yon dry fagots' heap, the mounting blaze."

XXXIV.

" Stay ! stay ! " said Williams, " wouldst thou lure the foe ?
Wouldst start the flame to tell him where we sleep ? "
The hunter smiled : " My Sachem does not know
How true the foe will to our footsteps keep ;
He hears, perchance, e'en now our accents low,
Or marks us from some tree on yonder steep ;
Waban will wake the fire ; 'twill serve to show
His posture, numbers, and will aid our blow."

XXXV.

Williams assented ; and while Waban fired
The arid fagots, he the burdens took
From off the palfreys, that, o'erwrought and tired,
Now stretched their toil-worn limbs and stoutly shook

Their liberated frames, and fuller breath respired,
And quiet grazed the lea. Then to the rock
The father hastened with a blazing brand;
His wife and children, linking hand in hand,

XXXVI.

Followed his steps. It was a cavern rude,
Its floor a level rock, its vaulted roof
Of granite masses formed, whose arches stood
More firmly for the weight they propped aloof; —
And here and there upon the floor were strewed
Extinguished brands, which, with like signs, gave proof
That men had dwelt there; — then, through screening vines
Sire Williams glances out and marks where shines,

XXXVII.

Full on red Waban's face, the mounting blaze.
Though half a bow-shot from the cavern he
Stands at the fire, yet its bright sheen displays
His hue and shape, and then could Williams see
How well the hunter judged thus far to raise
The burning pyre; no passage could there be
For hostile foot, save by that glittering flame,
Which well would light the arrow's certain aim.

XXXVIII.

Such furniture, as for their strongest need
The wretched exiles had themselves supplied,
Was to the cave now brought, with bread to feed
The little children clustering by the side
Of their fond parents. — Then did thanks suceeed
To God who deigned such comforts to provide,
And earnest prayers that His protecting might
Would shield them through the dangers of the night.

XXXIX.

With trembling haste a slight repast they took,
And to their several places then repaired;
The mother sate deep in the rocky nook
Beside her children, and their pallet shared;
Red Waban sate upon a jutting rock,
Hard by the cavern's mouth, the pass to guard;
While at the entrance, Williams listening stood,
Screened by the vines, and every passage viewed.

XL.

Deep night came down o'er forest, vale and hill —
The dismal hootings of the darkling owl,
The melancholy notes of Whip-poor-will,
And the lone wolf's far distant long-drawn howl,
Answered at times by panther screaming shrill,
Such hideous echoes through the forest roll,
That Mary shudders, and, from transient sleep,
The infants starting up for terror weep.

XLI.

But Williams listened with accustomed ear,
The dread of man alone disturbed his breast;
Hour after hour, unmarked by danger near,
The pass he watches for the savage priest,
And still, with eyes turned tow'rd the flame, doth hear
Whatever steps the rustling leaves molest;
And oft he thought that through the brake he saw
The waving fox-tail of the grim Pawaw.

XLII.

At last within the hollow forest rose
Strange sounds that were unmeaning to his ear; —
As if there human hands were breaking boughs
Green with the verdure of the new-born year;

Crash follows crash. — "Are these approaching foes?
Do one or more their march thus pioneer?"
No answer Waban made, but seemed to shrink
Among the vines along the rock's dark brink.

XLIII.

A moment more, and, bounding o'er the hedge,
A monster trotted tow'rd the mounting flame;
Then turned and bayed; — 'twere doubtful to allege
Dog, fox, or wolf, his aspect best became;
Still did he howl, with still increasing rage;
And Waban rose and gave his arrow aim,
But ere its flight, a whistled signal rang;
The hybrid turned, and to the forest sprang.

XLIV.

"The fell Pawaw! his dog!" red Waban cried,
In tone suppressed, and hid himself again;
And Williams feared he had too much relied
Upon the courage of that dusky man;
He took the hatchet from the hunter's side,
And dropt the feebler bludgeon from his span;
"Thy sachem," said he, "will himself essay
To aid his warrior in the approaching fray."

XLV.

"'Tis good!" said Waban, "so red sachems do —
But there! behold! behold! They come! They come!"
And Williams looked, and there, the thickets through,
Half in the light, half in the changeful gloom,
The forest boughs seemed moving out to view,
Branch heaped on branch, a weight most cumbersome
For human feet, yet human feet, he knew,
That burden bore, and with it dangers new.

XLVI.

Straight to the blaze they moved, and, dashing down
The 'eafy branches on the mounting flame,
Put out the light, and smoke and shadow brown,
In total darkness, all the glade o'ercame;
The mother shrieked; the father, with a groan,
Heard the wild cry, and stayed her sinking frame;
And both now felt that, with that smothered ray,
The last faint trembling hope had died away.

XLVII.

A fearful growl, close to the cavern's vent,
First broke the thrall of horror and surprise;
And, by the gleam the smouldering embers sent,
That canine hybrid, shooting from his eyes
A baleful glare, crouched seemingly intent
On the scared infants as his famine's prize;
The father drove the hatchet to his brains,
One yell he gave, and writhed in dying pains.

XLVIII.

Seeking the cavern's mouth along the rock,
Some groping hand the vine's thick foliage stirred;
"Where art thou Waban!" and the war-whoop broke;
Palsied with fear the trembling mother heard;
"Where art thou, Waban!" and, with horrid look,
A giant savage through the foliage stared;
But, at that moment, from his rocky mound
'Twanged Waban's bow with sudden sharpest sound.

XLIX.

Back reeled the savage with a dismal howl,
And on the earth like stricken bullock fell.
But still new terrors filled the father's soul;
He heard another and more fearful yell;

Across the glade a new assailant stole ;
The blaze reviving showed his movements well ;
And Williams sprang his warrior to sustain,
Just as he strained the yielding bow again.

L.

But as he drew the arrow to the head,
The cord snapt short ; he dashed the weapon down,
And leaping from the rock upon the glade,
With glittering scalping-knife and haughty frown,
Before the assailant stood, who paused, surveyed, —
Measuring the hunter's height from heel to crown, —
Then, swift as thought, the vengeful hatchet sent ;
At Waban's head the well-aimed weapon went.

LI.

But well the wary hunter knew his foe
And read his murderous purpose in his eye ;
He marked the coming steel, and, bending low,
Let it pass on and cleave the air on high ;
Behind him rings the cliff with shivering blow,
And far around its scattered atoms fly ;
Then with wild yells they wave the scalping-knife,
Together rush, and thrust and strike for life.

LII.

O ! 'twas a fearful scene — a moment dire ;
For on the issue of that contest lay
The lives of infants, mother, and of sire,
And the fair fame that crowns a distant day.
Soon closed the champions by the glimmering fire,
Limbs locked in limbs in terrible affray ;
They writhe — they wrench — they stagger to and fro,
Hands grasping hands that aim the fatal blow.

LIII.

Now struggling by the flames they past from sight,
For Williams lingered yet to guard the cave;
And there, enveloped in a deeper night,
With fiercer fury did the contest rave; —
The blow, the wrench, the pantings of the fight,
The crash of branches and of thickets gave
A dreadful note of every effort made,
Where life sought life within that shuddering shade.

LIV.

The mother sank beside the father, pale
And scared; the children her affright partook;
At times they raised the sympathetic wail;
At times with breathless terror mutely shook.
Williams peered out along the kindling vale;
No sign of other foe there met his look;
Then with a word that quick return presaged,
He rushed tow'rd where the doubtful contest raged.

LV.

He passed the flame and paused — for on his ear
There came, with one loud crash, a heavy sound;
He listens still; and silence, sudden, drear,
Reigns oe'r the glade, and through the gloom profound.
Who is the victim? Evil-boding fear
Tells him that Waban gasps upon the ground;
One bubbling groan, as if the life-blood gushed;
A shuddering struggle then — and all was hushed.

LVI.

In dire suspense the anxious father stood,
Yet did he still unmanly terrors quell;
His hand, yet innocent of human blood,
Now grasped the axe to meet the victor fell;

When from beneath the arches of the wood,
Rang the far-trembling, death-announcing yell,
So like a demon's issuing from his pit —
Who but that savage could the sound emit?

LVII.

Then moving slowly in the gloomy wood,
Doubtful and darkling through the ghostly shade,
A form approached, and as it onward trod,
Appeared distinct upon the open glade;
'Twas Waban! — Waban bathed in hostile blood;
And by the lock he held a trunkless head.
He stooped beside the mounting blaze to shew,
Still more distinct, his trophy to the view.

LVIII.

With lips still quivering, and with eyes unglazed,
The reeking fragment seemed as living still;
Fierce on the horrid thing the victor gazed,
The battle's wrath did still his bosom fill;
His eyes looked fire, another yell he raised,
That rang rebellowing from hill to hill;
Then, by the long dark lock swung from the ground,
He whirled on high the ghastly ball around.

LIX.

Around — around — still gathering force it went;
Still on his sinews strained the whirling head,
Till cleaving from the skull the scalp was rent,
And through the air the ponderous body sped;
Deep in the hollow woods its force was spent,
Thrice bounding from the ground, then falling dead; —
He turned and spoke: "No more the babes shall weep!
The grim Pawaw now sleeps! and Waban now can sleep!"

LX.

They passed the turf, as they the cavern sought,
Where fell the body of the earliest slain ; —
Said Waban, as he paused beside the spot,
" The black Priest's comrade never wakes again ; "
Then seized the body roughly by the foot,
And dragged it, bleeding yet, along the plain
Straight to the rocky steep, and o'er it dashed ;
It dropped in night ; re-echoing thickets crashed.

LXI.

Then the rude victor washed the stains away,
Cast him on earth, and soon deep slumber showed
How lightly in his rugged bosom lay
The horrid memory of that scene of blood ; —
But Williams watched until the dawning gray,
And Mary's fitful sleep the scenes renewed,
While the young dreamers in her circling arms,
Oft shrieked and sobbed in slumber's vain alarms.

LXII.

The morning dawns, and they their march resume ;
No perils now annoy their toilsome way ;
The night came down, and with its sober gloom
Brought quiet sleep until the morning's ray ;
Again they rose, and gained their joyous home
On Seekonk's marge, just at the close of day ;
And Him they blessed, who had in safety led
Them through dire perils, to their humble shed.

CANTO EIGHTH.

[Scene. The New Home in Seekonk's Mead.]

Through Seekonk's groves the morning sun once more
Flames in his glory. Waving verdant gold,
The boundless forest stands. Wild songsters pour,
From every dewy glade and tufted wold,
The melody of joy. From shore to shore
The tranquil waters dream, and soul-like hold
A mirrored world below of softest hue,
With underhanging vault of cloudless blue.

II.

And Williams issued from his humble cot,
Not as of late in solitary mood,
With cheerless heart and ill-foreboding thought,
But with light step and breast of quietude;
And by him came the partner of his lot,
And their young children, with blithe interlude
Of prattling speech, softening the graver talk
Of the fond parents in their morning walk.

III.

In sooth his buoyant spirits seemed to spread
O'er all about him their enlivening flush;
Ne'er was the grass so verdant on the glade,
Ne'er did the fountain sparkle with such gush;
Ne'er had the stream such lovely music made,
Ne'er sang so blithe the robin on the bush;
The woodland flowers far brighter hues displayed,
More sunny was the lawn, more dark the shade.

IV.

They walked and talked; he told his trials o'er;
And often Mary brushed aside the tear,
And oft they joined to thank kind Heaven once more,
That thus his sufferings were rewarded here;
Then they would sit beneath the fountain's bower,
And woo the breeze, or smiling bend the ear
To childly mirth, which, in its silver tone,
Soothed the rude wilds with music erst unknown.

V.

And all was happiness, — security
In blest seclusion. The rude storm seemed past,
The bow of promise spanned their life's new sky;
No threatening cloud their prospects overcast, —
No shadow lowered; but Heaven with gracious eye
Looked smiling down and blest their toils at last.
Their Salem friends to join them soon will try, —
That they're not here is all that brings a sigh.

VI.

Thus for a time did they anticipate
The bliss which Heaven for pilgrims has in store,
When their freed souls review their former state,
And bygone pains enhance their joys the more;
But yet one lingering fear of frowning fate,
Our Founder's bosom lightly brooded o'er —
No Indian throng, as promised by the seer,
Had bid them welcome with Whatcheer! Whatcheer!

VII.

But let it pass; — perchance it was a dream;
His thoughts seemed wandering or disturbed at best,
When stood or seemed to stand, in doubtful gleam,
That form scarce earthly, and his ears addrest; —

Ay, let it pass — for ill would it beseem
So staid a man to be at all deprest
By visionary fears or superstitious dread,
Whilst Heaven is showering mercies on his head.

VIII.

"Waban," he said, "a generous feast prepare,
We can be cheerful, and yet not be mad;
The good man's smiles may be a praise or prayer;
The wicked only should be very sad.
God feeds the birds, my Mary, in the air, —
Hear how they thank Him with their voices glad.
The heart of man should nearer kindred own,
Joy in his smiles and sorrow in his frown."

IX.

Then forth fared Waban to the winding shore,
And quickly laid its shelly treasure bare,
Nor failed the woody dingles to explore,
And trap the partridge or the nimble hare;
And soon beneath a beech, beside the door,
On marshalled stones the blazing fagots are;
And when with heat the pristine oven glows,
Waban his tribute gives, and covers close.

X.

Meanwhile our Founder went from place to place,
And did each plan of village grandeur name;
This rising mound the future church should grace,
Yon little dell the village school should claim;
That sloping lawn the council hall should base,
Where freemen's voices should the law proclaim,
And ne'er to bigot yield the civil rod,
But save the Church by leaving her to God.

XI.

So pass the hours, till westward through the skies
The sun begins to turn, and, savory grown,
From Waban's ready feast the vapors rise ;
The group beneath the beech then sit them down ;
" Thou kind and generous man," our Founder cries,
" Our brave defender ! thy complexion brown
Bars not thy presence ; — sit thou at the board, —
Of these bright lands God made thy kind the lord.

XII.

" My valliant warrior like a Keenomp fought,
And Chepian's priest before his valor fell !
But his white Sachem in the battle wrought
Too little for a chief he loves so well."
" The dog — the dog ! that had the children caught,"
Exclaimed the red man, " does his valor tell ;
A manit-dog he was, for well he knew
Whate'er the priest of Chepian bade him do.

XIII.

" The priest of Chepian and his comrade came
To fight the white man and his warrior brave ;
The fox-eared demon sought for other game,
And went to filch it from the rocky cave ;
My Sachem white a manittoo o'ercame,
To demon dark a fatal wound he gave ;
Brave is my Sachem, for he nobly slew
What Waban dreaded most, — that fearful manittoo ! "

XIV.

" Brother," said Williams, " under Power Divine,
That shields the just man in dark peril's hour,
Thine was the victory, and the glory thine
To quell Apollyon's priest — a demon's power !

Henceforth the demon must his lands resign,
And thou must be Mooshausick's Sagamore,
The right of conquest will do very well,
When Hell assails us, and we conquer Hell.

XV.

"But might the choice of either blameless go,
Mary! these fruits of suffering and of toils,
And racking cares through fourteen weeks of woe,
I'd prize far higher than the reeking spoils
Of all the nations laid by Cæsar low,
When he, the victor in Rome's civil broils,
Sate, like the Jove he worshipped, o'er a world
Whose crowns were offered, and whose incense curled.

XVI.

"And there is cause, I trow.—Who cannot see
That a dark cloud o'er our New England lowers?
The tender conscience struggles to be free;
The tyrant struggles, and retains his powers.
O, whither shall the hapless victims flee,
Where be their shelter when the tempest roars?
May it be here — may it be Heaven's decree,
To make its builder of a worm like me."

XVII.

While thus he spake, the neighboring thickets shook,
And from them issued one of mien austere;
And Williams knew a Plymouth elder's look,
In doctrines stern — in practice most severe;
His gait was slow, and loath he seemed to brook
Such signs of comfort and of earthly cheer;
And up he came, they scarce could reason why,
Like a dark cloud along a cheerful sky.

XVIII.

The gloom that gathered o'er our Father's breast,
He strove with heavy effort to dispel;
"Elder!" he said, "thou art an honored guest;
To see our ancient friends should please us well;
Thy journey long must give the banquet zest;
Come and partake our sylvan meal, and tell
The while what word or tidings thou mayst bear
From Plymouth's rulers and our brethren there."

XIX.

"Williams," he said, "I need no food of thine —
The wilds I thread not without store my own;
But I would fain beneath that roof recline
To-night, and rest my limbs till morn be shown; —
And there this eve some reasoning, I opine,
(For all may err,) a weighty theme upon,
May not be deemed amiss. — Perchance a light
Will on thee break and set thy feet aright."

XX.

"Elder, whatever themes," our Founder said,
"My scant attainments fit me to essay,
Shall not avoidance have from any dread
That thy strict logic may my faults betray;
That 'all may err,' means that our friends have strayed,
And not that *we* have wandered from the way;
It is a maxim to perversion grown,
And points to others' faults to hide our own.

XXI.

"But as my Plymouth visitor requests,
We'll seek that cottage; I have called it mine,
These hands have built it; but all friendly guests
May call it theirs, and, Elder, it is thine

While thou sojournest here. Whoever rests
Beneath its roof may not expect a fine,
A dungeon, scourge, or even banishment,
For heresy avowed, or doubted sentiment."

XXII.

They sought the cottage. — Its apartments rude,
But still a shelter from the cold and heat,
A cheerful fire and fur-clad settles shewed,
And other comforts, simple, plain, and neat.
The Elder paused, and all the mansion viewed,
Then, with a long-drawn sigh, he took his seat,
And briefly added — "Thou hast labored, friend,
Hard — very hard! I hope for worthy end."

XXIII.

He paused again, then solemnly began
A sad relation of the Church's state;
O'er many a schism and false doctrine ran,
That had obtruded on its peace of late;
But most alarming was our Founder's plan,
To leave things sacred to the free debate;
To make faith bow to erring reason's shrine,
And mortal man a judge of creeds divine.

XXIV.

"This simple truth no Christian man denies,"
He thus continued, "that the natural mind
Is prone to evil as the sparks to rise,
And to the good is obstinately blind;
Who then sees not, that looks with wisdom's eyes,
That God's elect should rule the human kind?
The good should govern, and the bad submit,
And saints alone are for dominion fit?"

XXV.

Our Founder answered, "Art thou from the pit?
Get thee behind me, if such thoughts be thine;
Did Christ his gospel to the world commit,
That his meek followers might in purple shine?
He spurned the foul temptation, it is writ,
And the Great Tempter felt his power divine;
Art thou far wiser than thy Master grown,
And spurn'st a heavenly for an earthly crown?"

XXVI.

"Nay — nay, friend Williams!" the grave elder cried,
"It is that crown of glory to secure
That the True Church should for her saints provide
The shield of law 'gainst heresy impure;
Quell every schism — crush the towering pride
Of the dark Tempter, ere his reign is sure;
For many finds he who are servants meet
To sow for him the tares among the wheat.

XXVII.

"Men ever busy, searching for the new,
Scanning our creed as if it doubtful were,
These would we hold perforce our doctrines to,
And the vain labor to convert them spare;
God may in time their restless souls renew,
And give them of his grace a saving share; —
Meanwhile our Church their errors would restrain,
And to her creed their wayward minds enchain."

XXVIII.

"A mortal thou!" our Founder here replied,
"Yet judge of conscience, — searcher of the heart
Thou, the elect? — but if it be denied,
How wilt thou prove it, or its proofs impart?

God gave to man that bright angelic guide,
A reasoning soul, his being's better part; —
He gave her freedom; but thou wouldst confine
And cramp her action to that creed of thine.

XXIX.

"Who binds the soul extends the reign of hell;
She's formed to err, but, erring, truth to find;
Pity her wanderings, but, O never quell
The bold aspirings of this angel blind!
God is her strength within, and bids her spell,
By outward promptings, the eternal Mind:
Long may she wander still in quest of light,
But day will dawn at last upon a polar night."

XXX.

"A dangerous tenet that!" the Elder said;
"A fallen angel doubtless she may be;
If truth she find by natural reason's aid,
It ever leads her to some heresy;
Indeed, the truth too often is betrayed
To minds ill-fitted for inquiry free;
From bad to worse, from worse to worst we go,
And end our being in eternal woe.

XXXI.

"Nature's own truths do oft the mind mislead;
From partial glimpses men will judge the whole;
And it were better if our Church's creed
Were learning's object and its utmost goal;
Reason would then no higher purpose need,
Than, by it, point the yet erratic soul
To her high hope and everlasting rest!"
Williams this heard, and spake with kindling breast:

XXXII.

" God gave man reason, that his soul might be
Free as his glance that spans the universe ;
All things around him prompt inquiry free,
All do his reason to research coerce ;
The Heavens, the Earth, the many breeding sea,
All have their shapes and qualities to nurse
The soul's aspirings, and, from blooming youth
To ripe old age, provoke the quest of truth.

XXXIII.

" Truth ! I would know thee wert thou e'er so bad,
Bad as thy persecutors deem or fear,
Wert thou in more than Gorgon terrors clad,
Thy glance a death to every feeling dear ;
Taught thou that God a demon's passions had,
That Earth is Hell, and that the damned dwell here,
And death the end of all ; — still would I know
The total Curse — the sum of being's woe.

XXXIV.

" Yet fear not this, for each new truth reveals
Of God a nearer and a brighter view ;
Anticipation lags behind, and feels
How mean her thought at each discovery new ;
Her stars were stones fired in revolving wheels —
Truth ! thine are worlds self-moved the boundless through
Who checks man's Reason in her heavenward flight,
Would shroud, O God ! thy glorious works in night !

XXXV.

" Whence didst thou learn that the Almighty's plan
Required thy wisdom to protect and save,
That, when he sent his Gospel down to man,
Thou to defend it must the soul enslave,

Enthrone deceit, and place beneath its ban
The honest heart, that dares its sentence brave?
Full well I trow the Prince of Darkness fits
The blood of martyrs shed by hypocrites.

XXXVI.

"Hearken for once; just as the conscience pure
Is here God's presence to my wayward will —
Not to constrain it, but to kindly lure
It on by duty's path, from every ill;
So to the State the Christian Church, secure
From human thrall, should be a conscience, still
Ne'er to constrain, save by that heavenly light
Which bares the Wrong, and maketh plain the Right."

XXXVII.

"No more, friend Williams," said the Elder here,
"No more will we on this grave theme delay;
My hopes were high, and 'twas an object dear
To shed some light on thy benighted way;
But still wilt thou with sinful purpose steer
Thy little bark against the tempest's sway;
On mayst thou go — I cannot say God speed!
But would thy object were some better deed.

XXXVIII.

"Couldst thou renounce thy purpose here to base
A State where heretics may refuge find,
I do not doubt that to some little grace
The Plymouth rulers would be well inclined;
But as it is, perhaps some other place,
Still more remote, may better suit thy mind;
But till the morn as may a guest befit,
My message hither do I pretermit."

XXXIX.

Our Founder pondered on the Elder's word;
What could this dark portentous message be,
With its delivery until morn deferred,
Lest it should mar night's hospitality.
The wrath of Plymouth he had not incurred,
He with her Winslow was in amity;
Then what strange message had the Elder borne,
That utterance sought, and yet was hushed till morn!

XL.

This cause, mysterious, darkling, undefined,
Did by degrees each cheerful thought efface,
And poured portentous glooms along his mind,
That seemed reflected by each friendly face;
The matron sighed, and childhood disinclined
To mirth or sport, sought slumber's soft embrace,
And soon the gathered night did all dispose,
To shun their boding thoughts in dull repose.

XLI.

Morn comes again; — the inmates of the cot
Rise from scant slumber, and their guest they greet;
"Williams," he said, "it is my thankless lot,
Thee with no pleasant message now to meet;
Nor hath our Winslow in his charge forgot
(For his behest I bear and words repeat)
His former friendship, but right loth is he
To vex his neighbors by obliging thee.

XLII.

"In short, thou art on Plymouth's own domain;
Beyond the Seekonk is the forest free, —
This must thou leave, but there thou mayst maintain
Thy State unharmed, and still our neighbor be;

Fain had I spared thee this deep searching pain,
By showing thee thy dangerous heresy;
It may not be; hence, therefore, must thou speed;
The Narragansets may protect thy ereed."

XLIII.

To breathless statues turned the listeners stood,
Silent as marble and as cold and pale;
With vacant gaze our Sire the Elder viewed,
O'erwhelmed, confounded by this sudden bale;
As when some swain, deep in the sheltering wood,
Ere he has seen the tempest on thc gale,
Marks the bright flash; the smitten senses reel;
He stands confounded ere he learns to feel.

XLIV.

At length reviving from the stunning shock,
His thoughts returning in a broken train,
Our Founder thus the speechless stupor broke: —
"I to my ancient friend may yet explain;
Just is my title here; the lands I took
Are part of Massasoit's wide domain,
And fairly purchased; mine they dearly are;
Make this but known, and Plymouth must forbear."

XLV.

"And didst thou think," the Elder cried, "to win
Of Pagan chief a title here secure?
Why not derive it from that man of sin
At papal Rome, — the Antichrist impure?
Our Church of Truth, against the Heathen thin,
Asserts her Canaan, and will make it sure.
Thy purchase feigned was by the Prophet shown
To Dudley, and by him to us made known."

XLVI.

"My purchase feigned!" our Founder quickly cried —
"God made that Pagan, and to Him He gave
Breath of this air, drink from yon crystal tide,
Food from these forest lawns and yonder wave:
Yea, He ordained this region, far and wide,
To be his home in life, in death his grave.
Is thy claim better? Canst thou trace thy right
From one superior to the God of might?"

XLVII.

The Elder answered: "Thinkest thou this land
For demons foul and their red votaries made?
Did not Jehovah, with his own right hand,
Tempest for Israel when the Heathen fled?
Does Plymouth's Church less in his favor stand?
Or spares he devils for the savage red?
As to our title, then, we trace it thus:
God gave James Stuart this, and James gave us."

XLVIII.

"God gave James Stuart this!" our Founder cried,
Up-starting from his seat as he began,
"God gave James Stuart this!" — a choking tide
Of kindling feeling through his bosom ran,
To which his better part free speech denied,
Since all the Christian strove against the man,
And strove not all in vain; — yet, bursting forth,
His soul came big with grief that stifled half her wrath.

XLIX.

"God gave James Stuart this! — I marvel when!
Fain would I see the deed Omniscience wrote;
Elder! there are commandments counting ten,
Which Great Jehovah upon Sinai taught;

Has He of late exempted Plymouth's men —
Reversed his justice and made sin no fault?
Taught them to covet of their neighbor's store,
And licensed robbery of the weak and poor?

L.

"Behold these hands, which labor has made hard, —
Look at this weather-beaten brow and face, —
And ask yourself if to be thus debarred
And hunted from their fruits like beast of chase,
Demands not meekness more than God has spared
To human hearts in his abundant grace!
Followed e'en here! — Again compelled to flee!
As if this desert were too good for me!

LI.

"But I can go. — Oh, yes! I can submit; —
God in his mercy will give shelter still;
Go — tell your Dudley in the book 'tis writ
That the oppressor shall hereafter feel;
Yet, gracious Lord, grant that repentance fit
Him to receive the everlasting seal
Of thy salvation — that his lost estate
Be yet revealed, ere it is all too late!

LII.

"Grieve not, my Mary! — Children, do not weep!
Though yonder verdant lawns, and opening flowers,
And groves whose shades the murmuring streamlets sweep,
All perish for us now, — yet on far shores,
Perchance by yon blue bay or rolling deep,
Far from white brethren, mid barbarian powers,
Your father's hands another glade may form, —
Another roof to shield you from the storm."

LIII.

As here he ceased, in all the agony
Of mental pain he paced the cottage floor;
Absorbed in his own woes scarce did he see
The Elder pass, and leave his humble door;
His toils, cares, hopes, all lost; and poverty
Sudden, gaunt, naked, spread its glooms once more.
A clashing sound first broke this mental strife;
'Twas Waban, edging sharp his scalping knife.

LIV.

And such an ireful look, (his eyes so bright,
So played his muscles and so gnashed his teeth) —
Red warrior ne'er did show, save when in fight
His weapon makes the hostile heart a sheath,
And forces out the soul. He looked a sprite
Kindling a hell within! — Recoiling 'neath
The horrid feelings that the image woke,
Our Founder shrank, and thus the form bespoke:

LV.

"What fiend, O Waban! thus inflames thy breast?'
The spell of frenzy at the accents broke;
The red man paused, his hand the bosom pressed,
His eyes still flashing fire, and thus he spoke:
"My chief was angry with his pale-faced guest,
And at my sachem's ire my own awoke;
I can pursue, — for viewless pinions lift
My nimble feet to speed thy vengeance swift."

LVI.

A freezing horror crept through every vein,
As Williams heard the son of Nature speak;
And humbled stood he, for that ire profane
Was but his own that did new semblance take

In that wild man ; — there stood the ancient Cain
And here the modern, better skilled to check
The wayward passions, and how dark soe'er
The mirror there might be, the real form was here.

LVII.

" Waban ! " at length he said, " I grieve to see
That all I sowed fell on a barren rock ;
How could my brother hope to gladden me
By such a deed ? Thou dost thy sachem shock !
O ! from thy savage nature try to flee ; —
Lay down thy murderous knife and tomahawk,
And dwell on better themes. New toils invite,
And high rewards my brother shall requite.

LVIII.

" Oft have I heard my hunter name with pride
His long, deep, hollow, arrow-winged canoe ;
Now drag her from the fern to Seekonk's tide,
And bid her skim once more the waters blue ;
She loves to rove, and we must far and wide
Seek other forests for a dwelling new ;
Our toils here end ; a cloud from Wamponand
Hangs o'er our glade, and blackens all the land."

LIX.

A fickle race the red man's kindred were,
Free as the elk that roved their native wood,
Here did they dwell to-day, to-morrow there,
As want or pleasure ruled the changeful mood ;
And Waban loved adventures bold and rare,
Nor heard with sorrow of a new abode ;
And forth he goes to seek his long canoe,
And trim her breast to skim the waters blue.

LX.

The while the infant group, from noon to night,
Passed here and there through all that cultured glade ;
And sighed and wept, by turns, or sobbed outright,
As to its charms their last farewell they bade ;
" Here father labored — here he slept till light
Renewed his toils," they often thought or said ;
And still the springing tears suffuse their eyes,
They dash them off— but still their sorrows rise.

LXI.

They plucked the blossoms from the blushing bush,
They quaffed the waters from the purling rill,
Their bread they scattered to the gentle thrush,
That seemed half-conscious of the coming ill ;
The rabbit eyed them from his covert brush,
Their crumbs supplied the little sparrow's bill ;
And sadly then they sighed their last adieu,
" Our little friends, farewell ! we sport no more with you."

LXII.

Meantime the parents in the cottage sate,
Their bosoms heaving and their thoughts in gloom.
" O ! what," cried Mary, " is our coming fate ?
And where, my husband, is our future home ?
Will not dire famine on our footsteps wait,
And perils meet us whereso'er we roam ?
Our harvest gone, who now can food supply ?
Forced from this roof, where shall our children lie ? "

LXIII.

" Trust we in God ! " our pious Founder said ;
" Doubt not the bounty of His providence,
Who Israel's children through the desert led,
And in all perils was there sure defence ;

He did not bid us this far forest tread,
To leave us here in want and impotence.
Warnings, my Mary, were most strangely given,
Such as I sometimes deem were sent from Heaven!

LXIV.

"Well can thy mind that stormy night recall,
The last in Salem that I dared abide, —
In fleecy torrents did the tempest fall,
Our little dwelling reeled from side to side;
The fading brands just glimmered on the wall,
Alone I sate, my heart with anguish tried,
When lo! a summons at the door I heard,
Deemed it a wretch distressed, the pass unbarred.

LXV.

"And straight appeared a venerable seer,
Such as on earth none ever saw before;
His temples spake at least their hundredth year,
In many a long and deeply furrowed score;
But, Oh! his eyes, in youthful glory clear,
Did from them a celestial radiance pour;
And then that face scarce seemed to veil the rays,
(Too bright for mortal!) of an angel's blaze.

LXVI.

"And when he spake, methought the music clear
Of tongue seraphic, filled his heavenly tone;
It came so full, yet gently, on my ear,
It well might serenade the Almighty's throne;
"Williams," it said, "I come on messsge here
Of mighty moment, to this age unknown;
Thou must not dally, or the tempest fear,
But fly by morn into the forest drear.

LXVII.

" 'Thou art to voyage an unexploréd flood,
No chart is there thy lonely bark to steer;
Beneath her rocks, around her tempests rude,
And persecution's billows in her rear,
Shall shake thy soul till it is near subdued;
But when the welcome of *Whatcheer! Whatcheer!*
Shall greet thine ears from Indian multitude,
Cast thou the Anchor there, and trust in God.'

LXVIII.

He went away, and I could not detain
Him from departing in the stormy night;
He would but promise to be seen again
Where faith in freedom should my rest invite.
I've often dwelt on that prophetic strain,
Recalled that voice, — and rightly can recite
The words it uttered. — Oh that I had more
Their import weighed, and shunned this tyrant shore!

LXIX.

" For, Mary, deem it not a sinful thought,
That Heaven should give her counsels to restore
The soul to freedom. — Lo! what wonders wrought
The God of Christians for the Church of yore;
With heathen darkness was the conscienee fraught,
And tyrants chained it to a barbarous lore;
To break like thraldom in a Christian land,
Angels may speak, and God disclose his hand.

LXX.

" This spot I rashly chose. No Indian train
Glad welcome gave to my enraptured ear,
And that mysterious form comes not again,
Inspiring courage; therefore hence we steer,

Nor land nor dwelling let us think to gain
Until the greeting of Whatcheer! Whatcheer!
Our journey stays, — there, there is our abode;
Our anchor there, our Hope, Almighty God!"

LXXI.

Thus spoke our Sire, and now, with ready hand
And spirits lightened, Mary did prepare
For their departure to another land, —
Alas! they knew not how and knew not where.
At eventide, red Waban from the strand,
The children from the glade, with cheerless air
Revisited the cot. — One more sad night,
And thence they journey at the rising light.

LXII.

Upon the cottage roof the Whip-poor-will
That night sang mournful to the conscious glade;
The lonely owl forsook her valley still,
And perched and hooted in the neighboring shade;
The wolf returned, and lapped the purling rill,
Sate on its marge, and at the cottage bayed;
From all its howling depths the desert came,
And seemed its lost dominion to reclaim.

CANTO NINTH.

SCENES. Seekonk's Stream and Banks—Whatcheer Cove and Shore—Mooshausick's Vale, or Site of Providencc.]

'Tis early morn; Pawtucket's torrent roar,
A solemn bass to Nature's anthem bold,
Alone wakes Williams' ear; its currents pour
Along with foaming haste, where they have rolled
Ages on ages, fretting here from shore
The basin broad, and there 'twixt hill and wold
Furrowing their channel deep; far hastening on,
Now lost in shades, now glimmering in the sun.

II.

No thraldom had they known save winter's frost;
No exile yet had their free bosom borne;
Deep in that glade (now to our Founder lost,)
Their wave eternal had a basin worn;
Oft thence their flow had borne the stealthy host,
In light canoes, before the gray of morn,
Darkling to strike the foe, — but now no more
They bear the freight of men athirst for gore.

III.

Early that morn, beside the tranquil flood,
Where ready trimmed rode Waban's frail canoe,
The banished man, his spouse and children, stood,
And bade their lately blooming hopes adieu.
The anxious mother had not yet subdued
Despondent sorrow, and the briny dew
Stole often down her cheeks; hers was the smart —
The searching anguish of the softer heart.

IV.

And, as she viewed the illimitable shade,
The haunt of savage men and beasts of prey,
She thought of all the dreadful ills arrayed
Against her children on their dangerous way;
"Ye houseless babes!" in her wild grief she said,
"What crimes were yours, what dire offences, say,
That even ye should share this cruel doom,
Beg of barbarians bread, and savage deserts roam?"

V.

But Father Williams, to his lot resigned,
Now rose to feelings of a loftier tone;
For Heaven to vigor had restored his mind,
And firmly braced it for the task unknown;
He scarcely glanced upon the toils behind;
His soul inspired did bolder visions own,
That from his breast dispelled each dismal gloom,
And cheered him onward to his destined home.

VI.

As the bold bird that builds her mansion high
On beetling crag or helmlock's lofty bough,
Deep in the desert, far from human eye,
And deems herself secure from every foe, —
Aloft in overshadowing branches nigh,
Perceives the wild-cat's threatening eye-balls glow,
And spurns her eyry, with ascending flight
To some tall ash that crests the mountain's height;

VII.

So his vain toils he coldly now surveyed;
He had but sunk a bolder wing to try;
He snatched the weepers from the hated glade,
And bore them lightly to the shallop nigh;

Then sprang into the stern, and cheerly bade
The dusky pilot his deft paddle ply; —
While, shoved from shore, the settling skiff descends
Low in the flood, and with the burden bends.

VIII.

Now with a giddy whirl the wheeling prow
Veering around points with the downward tide;
Then Waban's paddle cuts the glassy flow;
The mimic whirlpools pass on either side;
The surface cleaves, the waters boil below; —
The cot, the glade, the forests backward glide;
Until the shadows, moving as they flew,
Closed round the green and shut the roof from view.

IX.

Pawtucket's murmurs die upon their ears,
As through the smooth expanse the swift canoe
Drives on; and now the straitened pass appears
With jutting mounds that lofty forests shew; —
Each giant trunk a navy's timber rears;
Their mighty shadows o'er the flood they threw,
Shutting the heavens out, till glimmering day
Could scarce the long, dark, winding path display.

X.

Deep silence reigned o'er all the sable tide,
Broke only by the swarthy pilot's oar;
Under the arching boughs the wanderers glide,
And the dark ripplings curl from shore to shore;
The startled wood-ducks 'neath the waters hide,
Or on fleet pinions through the branches soar;
Whilst overhead the rattling boughs, at times,
Tell where the streaked raccoon or wild cat climbs.

XI.

Oft on the lofty banks, from jutting rocks
The buck looked wildly on the swift canoe;
Oft o'er the bramble leaped the wary fox,
With bushy tail and fur of ruddy hue;
Or wheeling high and gathering still in flocks,
The dark-winged crows did by their clamors shew
Where the lone owl, upon his moss-grown seat,
Maintained, unvanquished yet, his drear retreat.

XII.

Far down the winding pass at length they spy
Where wider currents, bright as liquid gold,
Spread glimmering in the sun; and to the eye,
Still further down, broad Narraganset rolled
His host of waters azure as the sky;
For breezes from the hoary ocean cooled
His heaving breast, and, with rejoicing glance,
From shore to shore the wanton waters dance.

XIII.

And now did Williams in his mind debate; —
Should he that night cleave Narraganset's flood,
Or on the Seekonk's bank till morning wait,
And scour the while Mooshausick's gloomy wood?
"Oh, would that Heaven might there predestinate
On earth, Soul-Liberty! thy first abode,"
(He often thought) "or where, in ocean's arms,
Aquidnay smiles in her wild virgin charms."

XIV.

While thus he ponders, down the stream he sees,
Where from th' encroaching cove the wood retires,
Dark wreaths of smoke rise o'er the lofty trees,
And deems that there some village wakes its fires.

"Waban," he says, "seest thou yon dusky breeze?
Say, from what town that curling smoke aspires?
What valiant sachem holds dominion there?
And what the number that he leads to war?"

XV.

"No town — the feast of peace!" — the red man cried,
And still with brawny arms impelled the oar;
"The clans from Narraganset far and wide,
And every tribe from Pokanoket's shore,
There smoke the pipe, and lay the axe aside, —
The pipe my chief to Potowomet bore;
Much they rejoice — their ancient hate forego,
And deem the White Chief a good Manittoo."

XVI.

A secret joy o'er Father Williams' breast
Stole like the fragrance of a balmy morn,
That breathes on sleep with fearful dreams opprest,
And wakes to its delights the wretch forlorn;
His toils and wanderings were not all unblest;
Some joy to others had his sufferings borne; —
But promised good brings doubt to the distrest,
And thus still dubious he his guide addrest:

XVII.

"What singing bird has on the wandering wing
Borne these strange tidings to my hunter's ear?
Where, on her pinions poising, did she sing,
And with her faithless song his bosom cheer?"
Waban replied, that he, while journeying
Unto the white man's town, through forests drear,
Had on Cohannet's banks his brethren met,
Bound to the banquet of the calumet.

XVIII.

And now hoarse murmurs reach our Founder's ear,
Rising behind a cape from crowds unseen ;
Then by the eastern marge they swiftly steer,
Till shows a tufted isle its welcome screen ;
Veering to this, they gain a prospect near
Of the red hosts that throng the opposing green ; —
Hundreds on hundreds did the fires surround,
Ran on the shores or verdant banks embrowned.

XIX.

Along the strand their speed the racers try,
And with their flying feet scarce touch the ground ;
From goal to goal the nimble hunters fly,
Crowds shout above them, and the woods resound ;
Here their lithe limbs the swarthy wrestlers ply, —
They tug, they writhe, they sweat, crowds shout around;
And there the circles watch the doubtful game,
Or greet the victor with their loud acclaim.

XX.

Then Williams saw, beneath a shady bower,
Miantonomi, Sachem young and brave,
And Massasoit, Haup's kind Sagamore,
And old Canonicus, so wise and grave,
Known by his peaceful pipe and tresses hoar,
And by the scarlet coat our Founder gave ;
Round them their captains intermingled stood,
All friendly now, though lately fierce for blood.

XXI.

From chief to chief the calumet they past,
Sitting, in silent solemn council, round ;
Each thrice inhaled, thrice forth the vapors cast, —
First to the power that bids the thunder sound,

Then to the gods that ride the angry blast,
Then to the fiends that dwell beneath the ground;
These made propitious, they the hatchet gave,
The bloody hatchet, to a peaceful grave.

XXII.

"Waban," said Williams, "we may venture now,
But pause ye short of the sure arrow's flight;"
Instant the red man drove the foaming prow
Along the cleaving flood, and, at the sight
Of the red hosts of men, the rose's glow
Fading at once left Mary's cheek all white;
And sudden fears her children's breasts surprise,
And, with their little hands, they veil their eyes.

XXIII.

Full in the front of that vast multitude,
Beyond an arrow's flight their skiff they stayed;
A sudden silence hushed the listening wood;
The crowds all paused, and with wild eyes surveyed
The pale-faced group, which in like stillness viewed
The wondering throngs. At length the woodland glade
Moves with their numbers; down the banks they pour,
Swarming and gathering on the dark'ning shore.

XXIV.

As when some urchin, with a heedless blow,
The insect nations of the hive alarms,
Down from their cells the watchful myriads flow,
And earth and air grow black with murmuring swarms;
So from the woods the wondering warriors go,
So o'er the dark'ning strand their concourse forms;
None save their haughty chiefs remain behind,
And they the lofty banks and forest margin lined.

XXV.

Then silence reigned again — but still they stared;
Some claspt their knives, and some their arrows drew;
Then from his seat his form our Founder reared,
The while beneath him rocked the frail canoe;
His hand he raised and manly forehead bared,
And straight their former friend the Sachems knew;
"Netop, Whatcheer!" broke on the listening air;
"Whatcheer! Whatcheer!" re-echoed here and there.

XXVI.

Then o'er and the o'er the words burst loud and clear,
In shouts that seemed to seek the joyous sky;
With open arms and greetings of "Whatcheer,"
Lived all the shores, and banks, and summits high;
"Whatcheer! Whatcheer!" resounded far and near,
"Whatcheer! Whatcheer!" the echoing woods reply;
"Whatcheer!" Whatcheer!" swells the exulting gales,
Sweeps o'er the laughing hills and trembles thro' the vales.

XXVII.

"Speed! Waban, speed!" with haste our Founder cried,
Soon as the hollow echoes died afar;
With lusty arm the hunter clove the tide,
The swift canoe seemed moving through the air;
One instant more and Williams, from her side,
Sprang on a rock, (thence giving it to share
His deathless fame,) and straight around him stood,
In cheerful throngs, the Indian multitude.

XXVIII.

Miantonomi, stepping from the crowd, [cheer!
Stretched forth his brawny hand, and cried "What-
Welcome, my brother! say, what lowering cloud,
O'er Seekonk's eastern marge, impels thee here?

Be it the Pequot in his numbers proud,
I hold his greeting in this glittering spear;
But oh! perchance my brother seeks this place,
To share with us the sacred rites of peace?"

XXIX.

"Not so, brave chief; it is to seek a home,
By seer announced, by Heaven to me assigned;
Yonder abode lies wrapt in sable gloom,
Not of the Pequot, but the Plymouth kind;
My promised harvest blighted in the bloom,
My voiceless roof, — all, all have I resigned,
And hither come to seek Mooshausick's plain,
And beg the gift once proffered me in vain."

XXX.

Good Massasoit, who did these accents hear,
Would now our Founder greet, — and with a face,
That spoke a sorrow deep and most sincere:
"Long have I strove," he said, "in thought to trace
What Manit most my Plymouth friends revere;
For aye their deeds their better words efface,
Their tongues much speak of Spirit good and great,
Their hands much do the work of Chepian's hate."

XXXI.

Here grave Canonicus came from the throng, —
"Welcome, my son!" exclaimed the aged chief,
"Bear thou the inflictions of thy kindred's wrong
With man's stout courage, not with woman's grief;
The lands thou seëst shall to thee belong,
And for thy comforts lost, a moment brief
Shall all the loss repair; — o'er yonder height
Is where till lately Chepian reigned in might.

XXXII.

"Abandoned by his Priest his land now lies, —
Left by that Priest's own slaves, — for slaves had he
Who tilled his field and made his mansion rise,
Adorned with mats and colors fair to see;
The Priest is gone, — how, nothing care the wise;
His timid followers from their labors flee, —
All fear within the fiend's control to stay;
For who but Chepian's Priest can Chepian sway?"

XXXIII.

So spake Canonicus, the wise and old, —
While shouts on shouts a full accordance shewed, —
Then turned and sought the late forsaken hold;
Our Sire, the matron, and her charge pursued;
The ready tribes, behind them forming, rolled
In march triumphant onward through the wood,
Cheering the exile's home; and as they sped,
Earth rumbled under their far-thundering tread.

XXXIV.

The forest branches, woven overhead,
Shut out the day and cast a twilight gloom; —
For where long since extends the verdant mead,
Shines the fair palace, beauteous gardens bloom,
One vault of green o'er-roofed a palisade
Of trunks and brambles, boscage, brake and broom; —
Amid which chafed the warriors' surly mood,
And cracked and crashed the thickets as they trod.

XXXV.

They gained the height where now the Muses reign —
Where now Brown's bounty* to the human mind
Links earth and heaven; the fruit of honest gain
Moulding the youthful soul, by taste refined,

* Brown University.

To truth's eternal quest. — How poor and vain,
To such high bounty, seems a meaner kind ; —
But this in after times ; — for forests then
Mantled the height and swarmed with savage men.

XXXVI.

Thence, in the vale below, our Founder sees
Where dark Mooshausick rolls, and seaward casts,
Its waters, — rolling under lofty trees
With crossing branches, thick as e'er the masts
That shall, thereafter, on the wanton breeze
Display their banners, when, in sounding blasts,
The cannon utters its triumphant voice,
And bids the land through all its States rejoice.

XXXVII.

And thence, with prescient eye, he gazes far
O'er the rude sites of palaces and shrines,
Where Grecian beauty to the buxom air
Shall rise resplendent in its shapely lines ;
Ay, almost hears the future pavements jar
Beneath a people's wealth, and half divines
From thee, Soul-Liberty ! what glories wait
Thy earliest altars — thy predestined State.

XXXVIII.

Then down the steep, by paths scored in its side,
Where frequent deer had sought the floods below,
He past, still following his dusky guide
And stooping often under drooping bough,
To a broad cultured field, expanding wide
Betwixt dense thickets and Mooshausick's flow.
Its deep green rows of waving maize foretold
Abundant harvest from a fertile mould.

XXXIX.

The Priest's forsaken lodge rose thereamid,
Beside a fountain on a verdant lawn,
Spacious as some great Sachem's, and half-hid
In mantling vines wherewith it was o'ergrown;
And Williams thought of what his warrior did
On that dark bloody night, so direly known, —
Mourning the fate that caused the Sorcerer's doom;
Yet sees its fruit, a temporary home.

XL.

But some last scruples still his mind assail;
For, ah! what rites had made the place profane!
When thus the chief: — "No more my son bewail
Thy comforts lost; let the Great Spirit reign
Where Chepian reigned; ay, let thy God prevail;
Be thou His Priest, and this thine own domain;
From wild Pawtucket to Pawtuxet's bounds
To thee and thine be all the teeming grounds."

XLI.

High thanks Sire Williams paid; — but as he spake,
Came over him a feeling passing strange;
A prophet's rapture in his breast did wake;
For, at that moment, down the boundless range
Of heavenly spheres did some bright being take
Wing to his soul, and wrought to suited change
The visual nerve, and straight in outward space
Stood manifest in its celestial grace.*

XLII.

At once he cried, "I see! I see the seer!
His very form, his very shape and air!
By yonder fount; — the same his robes appear;
The same his radiant eyes and flowing hair;

* See note.

Mary! my children! come! his accents hear;
See age and youth one heavenly beauty share!"
They with him moved, (yet ne'er the vision saw,)
Until the father paused, transfixed in sacred awe.

XLIII.

For strange to tell, youth's lingering light began
To spread fresh glories o'er that aged face;
Till over beard, and hair, and visage wan,
Burst the full splendor of angelic grace;
A lambent flame about the forehead ran,
And rainbow hues the earthly robes displace;
The curling locks, like beams of living light,
Streamed back and glowed insufferably bright.

XLIV.

The figure seemed to grow; its dazzling eyes
Were for a while upon Sire Williams bent,
Then upward turned, and, looking to the skies,
Spake hope in God with silence eloquent.
Still did it brighten, still its stature rise,
With Heaven's own grandeur seeming to augment; —
The pilgrim staff no longer did it hold,
But on an Anchor leant that blazed ethereal gold.

XLV.

Our Father gazed, and, from that heavenward eye,
Beheld the clear angelic radiance flow;
And saw that figure, as it towered on high,
With inward glory fill, dilate and grow
Translucent, — and then fade, — as from the sky
The sunset fades or fades the radiant bow;
Until, dissolving in transparent air,
It disappeared and left no traces there.

XLVI.

Then low, on bended knees, he drops to own
The Heaven-born vision, and his soul declare ;
His wife and children, near him kneeling down,
Send up their hearts upon the wings of prayer ;
The dusky tribes, in crescent round them shown,
Give ear ; — hill, vale and forest listeners are ;
Force to each word their faithful echoes lend,
And with their Ruler's prayers their own ascend.

XLVII.

" Mysterious Power ! who dost in wonders speak,
We note thy tokens and their import spell ;
Let Persecution still its vengeance wreak —
Let its fierce billows roll with mountain swell,
Here must we Anchor, and their force repel.
Here, more securely, shall our bannered State
Blazon the conscience sacred — ever free ;
Here shall she breast the coming storms of fate
And ride triumphant o'er the raging sea,
Her well-cast Anchor here, her lasting Hope in Thee !

XLVIII.

" Here, thy assurance gives our wanderings rest,
And shows where all our future toils must be ;
Lord ! be our labors by thy mercies blest,
And send their fruits to far posterity ;
Let our example still the Conscience free,
Where'er she is by tyrant force enchained,
And while the thraldom lasts, Oh ! let her see
Her safety here, where, ever unprofaned
By persecution, her free altars are maintained.

XLIX.

"Accept, O Lord! our thanks for mercies past;
Thou wast our cloud by day, our fire by night,
While yet we journeyed through the dreary vast;
Thou Canaan more than givest to our sight; —
Lord! 'tis possessed, not seen from Pisgah's height.
We deeply feel this high beneficence;
And ages hence our children shall recite
Of Thy protecting grace their Father's sense,
And, when they name their Home, Proclaim Thy PROVIDENCE!"

NOTES.*

CANTO FIRST.

STANZA I.

I SING *of trials, toils and sufferings great,*
Which FATHER WILLIAMS *in his exile bore,*
That he the conscience-bound might liberate,
And to the soul her sacred rights restore.

"ROGER WILLIAMS was born of reputable parents in Wales, A. D. 1598. He was educated at the University of Oxford; was regularly admitted to Orders in the Church of England, and preached for some time as a minister of that Church; but on embracing the doctrines of the Puritans, he rendered himself obnoxious to the laws against the non-conformists, and embarked for America, where he arrived with his wife, whose name was Mary, on the 5th of February, A. D. 1631." He had scarcely landed ere he began to assert the principle of religious freedom, and insist on a rigid separation from the Church of England. A declaration that the magistrate ought not to interfere in matters of conscience could not fail to excite the jealousy of a government constituted as that of Massachusetts then was; and this jealousy was roused into active hostility when, in the April following his arrival, he was called by the Church of Salem as teaching Elder under their then Pastor, Mr. Skelton.

"Of this appointment," says Winthrop, "the Governor of Massachusetts was informed, who immediately convened a Court in Boston to take the subject into consideration." Their deliberations resulted in a letter addressed to Mr. Endicot, of Salem, to this effect: — "That whereas Mr. Williams had re-

* These notes were mostly written for the poem as first published in 1832; — none after 1847, when the author died. — [EDITOR.]

fused to join the churches at Boston, because they would not make a public declaration of their repentance, for having communion with the Churches of England while they tarried there, and besides had declared his opinion that the magistrate might not punish the breach of the Sabbath, nor any other offence that was a breach of the first table; and therefore they marveled they would choose him without advising with the council, and withal desired him that they would forbear to proceed until they had considered about it."

This interference of the government forced him to leave Salem. "He removed to Plymouth, and was engaged assistant to Mr. Ralph Smith, the pastor of the church at that place. Here he remained until he found his views of Religious Toleration and strict non-conformity gave offence to some of his hearers, when he returned again to Salem, and was settled there after Mr. Skelton's death, which took place on the 2d of August, 1634." In this situation Williams preached against the cross in the ensign, as a relic of papal superstition. His preaching however, on this topic, does not seem to have been a subject of complaint, only as it led some of his friends to the indiscretion of defacing the colors. His persecutors, in excusing this act to the government of England, say that they did so, "with as much wariness as they might, being doubtful themselves of the lawfulness of a cross in an ensign." But though he may have given no offence by declaring an opinion on this subject so little at variance with their own, yet when he ventured to speak against the king's patent, by which he had granted to his subjects the lands which belonged to the Indians; and, above all, to maintain that the civil magistrate ought not to interfere in matters of conscience, except for the preservation of peace, his presence within the jurisdiction of Massachusetts could no longer be tolerated. A summons was granted for his appearance at the next court.

He appeared accordingly. "It was laid to his charge," says Winthrop, "that, being under question before the magistracy and churches for divers dangerous opinions, viz: That the magistrate ought not to punish for the breaches of the first table, otherwise than in such cases as do disturb the public peace. 2d. That he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man. 3d. That a man ought not to pray with such, though wife, children, &c. 4th. That a man ought not to give thanks after

sacrament nor after meat, &c., and that other churches were about to write the church of Salem to admonish him of these errors, notwithstanding the church had since called him to the office of Teacher."

These charges having been read, all the magistrates and ministers concurred in denouncing the opinions of Williams as erroneous and dangerous, and agreed that the calling him to office at that time was a great contempt of authority. He and the church of Salem were allowed until the next General Court to consider of these charges, and then either to give satisfaction to the Court, or else to expect sentence.

Much warmth of feeling was exhibited in the discussion of these charges; and in the course of the debate it seems the ministers were required to give their opinions severally. All agreed that he who asserted that the civil magistrate ought not to interfere in case of heresy, apostacy, etc., ought to be removed, and that other churches ought to request the magistrates to remove him. Nothing will give a better idea of the state of feeling on this occasion than the fact that when the town of Salem at this time petitioned, claiming some land at Marblehead as belonging to the town, the petition was refused a hearing, on the ground that the church of Salem had chosen Mr. Williams her teacher, and by such choice had offered contempt to the magistrates.

The attendance of all the Ministers of the Bay at the next General Court was requested. This was held in the month of November, 1635. Before this venerable congregation of all the dignitaries of the church, Williams appeared, and defended his opinions. His defence, it seems, was not satisfactory. They offered him further time for conference or disputation. This he declined, and chose to dispute presently. Mr. Hooker was appointed to dispute with him. But Mr. Hooker's logic, seconded as it was by the whole civil and ecclesiastical power of Massachusetts, could not force him to recognise the right of the civil magistrate to punish heresy, or to admit that the king's patent could of itself give a just title to the lands of the Indians. The consequence was, that on the following morning he was sentenced to depart, within six weeks, out of the jurisdiction of Massachusetts.

Such were the causes of Williams' banishment, and such the circumstances under which the decree was passed. He was a

man who fearlessly asserted his principles, and practiced upon them to their fullest extent. Persecution could not drive him to a renunciation of his opinions. His observance of any principle which he adopted was conscientiously strict; but this very strictness of observance had its advantages, in enabling him with more certainty to detect any latent error which his opinions involved. He was as free to declare his errors as he was to assert whatever appeared to him to be right. His very honesty in this respect has given occasion to his enemies to brand his character with inconsistency and apostacy; but he remained true to every principle espoused by him, which posterity has since sanctioned, and inconstant in those things only which are unimportant in themselves, and which are unsettled even in the present day. A tacit confession of his own fallibility was implied in the great principle of which he was the earliest asserter, that government ought not to interfere in matters of conscience; and therein consisted a wide difference between his errors, whatever they were, and those of his persecutors. This fact, in estimating the character of Williams, cannot be too well considered.

"Subsequently to his banishment, he was permitted to remain until spring, on condition that he did not attempt to draw others to his opinions." But the friends of Williams could not consent to see their favorite pastor leave them, without frequently visiting him whilst they yet had an opportunity. In these interviews, the plan of establishing a colony in the Narraganset country, where the principle of Religious Freedom (the assertion of which had been the chief cause of his banishment) should be carried into effect, was discussed and matured. It is also highly probable that he did not fail to do what he conceived to be the duty of a faithful pastor in other respects. At length the rumor of these meetings reached the ears of the civil authorities; and in January, 1635, (O. S.,) "The governor and assistants," says Winthrop, "met in Boston to consider about Mr. Williams; for they were credibly informed, that he, notwithstanding the injunction laid upon him, (upon liberty granted him to stay until spring,) not to go about to draw others to his opinions, did use to entertain company in his house, and to preach to them even of such points as he had been sentenced for; and it was agreed to send him into England by a ship then ready to depart. The reason was because

he had drawn about twenty persons to his opinions, and they were intending to erect a plantation about the Narraganset bay, from whence the infection would easily spread into these churches, the people being many of them much taken with an apprehension of his godliness. Whereupon a warrant was sent to him to come presently to Boston, to be shipped, &c. He returned for answer, (and divers of Salem came with it,) that he could not without hazard of his life, &c. Whereupon a pinnace was sent with commission to Captain Underhill, &c., to apprehend him, and carry him on board the ship, which then rode at Nantascutt. But when they came to his house they found he had been gone three days, but whither they could not learn."

It thus appears that the object of his government, in directing his immediate apprehension at this time, was to prevent the establishment of a colony in which the civil authority should not be permitted to interfere with the religious opinions of the citizens.

Williams was in the thirty-seventh or thirty-eighth year of his age at the time of his banishment. He fled to a wilderness inhabited only by savages. The two principal tribes — the Narragansets and Wampanoags — had, but a short time before he entered their country, been engaged in open hostilities. The government of Plymouth had on one occasion extended its aid to its early friend and ally, Massasoit, chief sachem of the Wampanoags. This interference had smothered, but not extinguished the flame. With these warring tribes, one of which (the Narragansets) was a very martial and numerous people, and exceedingly jealous of the whites, Williams was under the necessity of establishing relations of amity. He himself says that he was forced to travel between their sachems to satisfy them and all their dependent spirits of his honest intentions to live peaceably by them. He acted the part of a peace-maker amongst them, and eventually won, even for the benefit of his persecutors, the confidence of the Narragansets. It was through his influence that all the Indians in the vicinity of Narraganset bay were, shortly after his settlement at Mooshausick, united, and their whole force, under the directions of the very men who had driven him into the wilderness, brought to co-operate with the Massachusetts forces against the Pequots.

[See Winthrop's Journal, and a Sketch of the Life of Roger Williams, appended to the first volume of the Rhode Island Historical Collections, for the above extracts.]

STANZA XII.

Much less my consort and these pledges dear.

Williams was the father of six children, viz: Mary, Freeborn, Providence, Mercy, Daniel, and Joseph. I am not able to determine their number at the time of his banishment.

STANZA XLIII.

Thrice did our northern tiger seem to come.

Frequently called the Panther, the Cat of the Mountain, or Catamount. There is indeed no animal of America entitled to the appellation of the Panther; but this name is frequently applied to the animal mentioned, and is adopted in this production for that reason.

STANZA LVIII.

'Twas Waban's cry at which the monsters ran.

The Indians imitate very perfectly the cry of wild beasts, and use that art in conveying signals and for other purposes, during their hunts and other expeditions. The known antipathy between the wolf and the catamount or panther, and the superiority of the latter over the former, may justify the text.

STANZA LXVI.

Where burning fagot nevermore shall glow,
Fired by the wrath of persecuting men.

I know not that the fagot has been generally used in any protestant country for the extirpation of heresy, yet its very general application to that purpose by Roman Catholics has, by common consent, made it the appropriate emblem of persecution in all countries.

STANZA LXIX.

Until Sowaniu's breezes scatter flowers again.

Sowaniu, or the Paradise of the Indians, was supposed to be an island in the far southwest. It was the favorite residence of their great god, Cawtantowit, and the land of departed spirits. The balmy southwest was a gale breathed from the heaven of the Indians.

STANZA LXXX.

"And may the Manittoo of dreams," he said, &c.

Manittoo — a God. It is a word which seems to have been applied to an extraordinary power, or mysterious influence. Any astonishing effect, produced by a cause which the Indians could not comprehend, they appear to have ascribed to the agency of a Manittoo. It is natural for man to draw his ideas of power or causation, from what he feels in himself; and when he does so, he will ascribe the effects which he observes to the influence of mind. As he advances in knowledge the number of these mysterious agents diminishes, until at last he is forced upon the idea of one great, designing, first cause or agent. Man, from his very constitution, therefore, must be a believer in the existence of God. He approaches a knowledge of his unity by degrees, and improves in his religious opinions in the same manner as he advances to the science of astronomy. How essential then is that freedom of opinion which our Founder sought to establish!

CANTO SECOND.

STANZA XIII.

In a vast eagles's form embodied, He
Did o'er the deep on outstretched pinions spring.

It was the belief of the Chippewas, a tribe supposed to have descended from the same original stock (Lenni Lenape) with the Narragansets, that, before the earth appeared, all was one vast body of waters; that the Great Spirit, assuming the shape of a mighty eagle, whose eyes were as fire, and the sound of whose wings was as thunder, passed over the abyss, and that, upon his touching the water, the earth rose from the deep. It was a prevailing tradition among the Delawares and other tribes, according to Heckewelder, that the earth was an island, supported on the back of a huge tortoise, called in the text Unamis. It is the object of the author to embrace in the text a selection of their scattered traditions on the subject of creation, and to give them something like the consistency of a system. Waban, therefore, adopting their leading ideas, has drawn out his description into the appropriate sequency of events. Their Creator was a Manittoo, a mysteriously operating power, and of the same nature as that principle of causation which they felt in themselves, as constituting their own being. The term *Cowwewonck*, in the Narraganset dialect, signified the soul, and was derived from *Cowwene*, to sleep; because, said they, it operates when the body sleeps. Hence in the text, whilst the Great Spirit slept, he is represented as commencing the work of creation — operating on the immense of waters as a part of his own being, and imparting to it organic existences, (as the soul from itself creates its own conceptions,) thus giving a sort of dreamy existence to the earth and all living things, ere He assumed the shape of the eagle, and at his fiat imparted to them substantial form and vital energy. The idea, that the earth was raised out of the Ocean, seems to have been pretty general amongst the Aborigines.

STANZA XIX.

Yet man was not; then great Cawtantowit spoke
To the hard mountain crags, and called for man.

According to the traditions of the Narragansets, the Great Spirit formed the first man from a stone, which, disliking, he broke, and then formed another man and woman from a tree; and from this pair sprang the Indians.

STANZA XXII.

Then did he send Yotaanit on high —

Yotaanit was the God of Fire; Keesuckquand, God of the Sun; Nanapaushat, of the Moon; and Wamponand was the ruling Deity of the East.

STANZA XXIII.

All things thus were formed from what was good,
And the foul refuse every evil had;
But it had felt the influence of the God,
(How should it not?) —

Heckewelder ascribes to the Indians the opinion that nothing bad could proceed from the Great and Good Spirit. Waban is here speaking in conformity to that opinion. Hence he represents the creation of Chepian, or the evil principle, as an incidental but necessary effect, yet forming no part of the original design.

STANZA XXVII.

And manittoos, that never death shall fear,
Do too within this moral form abide.

"They conceive," says Williams, "that there are many gods, or divine powers, within the body of man — in his pulse, heart, lungs, &c."

XXVIII.

But if a sluggard and a coward, then
To rove all wretched in the gloom of night.

"They believe that the soules of men and women go to the southwest — their great and good men to Cawtantowit his house, where they have hopes, as the Turks have, of carnal joys. Murtherers, liars, &c., their soules (say they) wander restless abroad."—Williams' Key.

STANZA XXXVII.

This yet unproved and doubted by the best.

The Charter of Pennsylvania was granted in 1681. The philanthropic Penn was preceded by Williams in the adoption of a mild and pacific policy toward the natives. Both seem to have been equally successful.

STANZA XLV.

Ere dark pestilence
Devoured his warriors — laid its hundreds low,
That sachem's war-whoop roused to his defence
Three thousand bow-men, and he still can show
A mighty force.

The pestilence, to which Waban has reference, is that which shortly preceded the arrival of the Plymouth planters. The Wampanoags, before this calamity, were relatively a powerful people. Patuxet, afterwards Plymouth, was then under the government of their sachem, who, at times, made it his place of residence. Indeed the whole country between Seekonk and the ocean, eastward, seems to have been occupied by tribes more or less subject to him. Those toward the Cape and about Buzzard's Bay were, however, rather his tributaries than his subjects. The different clans or communities, in this extensive territory, were under the government of many petty sachems, who regarded Ousamequin (afterwards Massasoit) as their chief. Availing themselves of the misfortune of their neighbors, the Narragansets extended their conquests eastward over some of these under-sachems; and when Ousamequin fled from Pawtuxet to Pokanoket, to avoid the devouring sickness, he found not only Aquidnay, but a part of Pokanoket, subject to his enemies. (See note to stanza xxxiii canto iv.) Pokanoket was the Indian name of the neck of land between Taunton river

on the east, and Seekonk and Providence rivers on the west. Mount Hope, or Haup as it is called in the text, forms its south-eastern extreme. The number of warriors stated in the text as subject to Ousamequin, is hypothetical. Some of the Nipnets were tributary to the Narragansets, but the greater part of them were the allies or subjects of the Wampanoag Chief.

STANZA XLVI.

His highest chief is Corbitant the stern —
He bears a fox's head and panther's heart.

Mr. Winslow, who had frequent conferences with this chief, represents him as "a hollow-hearted friend to the Plymouth planters, a notable politician, &c." He, with others, was suspected of conspiring against the whites, and Captain Standish was sent, on one occasion, to execute summary justice upon him and his confederates. He, however, escaped, and afterwards made his peace with them through the mediation of Massasoit. His residence was at Mattapoiset, now Swanzey.

STANZA XLVII.

Yet oft their children bleed
When the far west sends down her Maquas fell —
Warriors who hungry on their victims steal,
And make of human flesh a dreadful meal.

In compliance with the common orthography, the name of this tribe is written *Maqua*. Williams says, that in the Narraganset dialect they were called Mohawaugsuck, or Mauquauog, from mobo, to eat; and were considered Cannibals. It is probable, from its location, that he speaks of the same tribe under the name of Mitucknechakick, or tree eaters, "a people," says he, "so called, living between three and four hundred miles west into the land, from their eating Mituckquash — that is, trees. They are men-eaters — they set no corn, but live on the bark of the chestnut and other fine trees," &c. Again, he says, "The Maquaogs, or men-eaters, that live two or three hundred miles west," &c. Thus it is plain that the Maquas were considered, by the Narragansets and their neighboring tribes, Cannibals.

STANZA XLVIII.

Here lies Namasket tow'rd the rising sun.

Namasket was within the limits of the territory which now constitutes the township of Middleborough, and was about fifteen miles from Plymouth.

Here farther down, Cohannet's banks upon
Spreads broad Pocasset, strong Appanow's hold.

The territory under that name, now forms a part of Fall River, Mass., and all, or nearly all, Tiverton, R. I. The territory south to the sea, was called Sagkonate, now written Sekonnet, or Seconnet, forming at this time the township of Little Compton. The northeasterly part of the island of Aquidnay was also called Pocasset. This word may be a derivative from the Indian name of the strait separating the island from the mainland. The name of the chieftain in the text must be received exclusively on Waban's authority.

STANZA L.

Two mighty chiefs, one cautious, wise, and old,
One young and strong, and terrible in fight,
All Narraganset and Coweset hold;
One lodge they build — one council fire they light.

In a deposition of Williams, dated the 18th June, 1682, he says, that it was the general and constant declaration that the father of Canonicus had three sons — that Canonicus was his heir — that his youngest brother's son, whose name was Miantonomi, was his marshal, or executioner, and did nothing without his consent.

Five thousand warriors give their arrows flight.

This is the number at which Williams estimates them. Calendar says they were a numerous, rich, and powerful people, and though they were, by some, said to have been less fierce and warlike than the Pequots, yet it appears that they had, before the English came, not only increased their numbers by receiving many who fled to them from the devouring sickness

or plague in other parts of the land, but they had enlarged their territories, both on the eastern and western boundaries. Their numbers must have diminished rapidly, as Hutchinson estimates their warriors in 1675 at two thousand; this estimate, however, might not embrace those tribes which were subject to, or dependant on them, when Williams entered the country. They seem to have been a people greatly in advance of their neighbors. They excelled in the manufacture of Wampum-peag, and supplied other nations with it — also with pendants, bracelets, tobacco pipes of stone, and pots for cookery. After the arrival of the whites, they traded with them for their goods, and supplied other tribes with them at an advance.

STANZA LI.

Dark rolling Seekonk does their realm divide
From Pokanoket, Massasoit's reign—

Under the general name of Narraganset, was included Narraganset proper and Coweset. Narraganset proper extended south from what is now Warwick to the ocean; Coweset, from Narraganset northerly to the Nipmuck country, which now forms Oxford, Mass., and some other adjoining towns. The western boundaries of Narraganset and Coweset cannot be definitly ascertained. Gookins says, the Narraganset jurisdiction extended thirty or forty miles from Seekonk river and Narraganset bay, including the islands, southwesterly to a place called Wekapage, four or five miles to the eastward of Pawcatuck river — that it included part of Long Island, Block Island, Coweset and Niantick, and received tribute from some of the Nipmucks. After some research, I am induced to belive that the Nianticks occupied the territory now called Westerly; if so, then the jurisdiction of the Narragansets extended to the Pawcatuck, and perhaps beyond it. The tribe next westward was that which dwelt "in the twist of Pequot river," now called the Thames; and was under the control of the fierce and warlike Uncas, a chief who had rebelled against Sassacus, the Pequot sachem, and detached from its allegiance a considerable portion of his nation, of which he had formed a distinct tribe.

STANZA LIII.

Awanux gave him strength, and, with strange fear,
Did M'antonomi at the big guns start.

"We cannot conceive," says Mourt in his journal, "but that he [Massasoit] is willing to have peace with us: for they have seen our people sometimes alone, two or three in the woods at work and fowling, whereas they offered them no harm: and especially, because he hath a potent adversary, the Narrohigansets, that are at war with him, against whom he thinks we may be of some strength to him; for our pieces are terrible unto them."

STANZA LXXIV.

At length his vision opened on a space,
Level and broad, and stretching without bound
Southward afar — nor rose, o'er all its face,
A tree, or shrub, or rock or swelling mound.

It may excite our wonder that the barren plains of Seekonk should have been at first selected by our Founder for a place of settlement. But it is possible that at the time when the selection was made they were in a state, as to fertility, different from their present. However this may be, one thing is certain, that Williams made the selection during the winter, when vegetation afforded no criterion of the soil, whilst its very nakedness was in some respects a recommendation. It was an object with the early settlers to establish themselves in the neighborhood of some clearing, and particularly on meadows in the vicinity of rivers. These yielded pasturage through the summer, and forage for their cattle during winter, and land for tillage without the preparatory steps of clearing.

CANTO THIRD.

STANZA VII.

War! War! my brother.

Williams says that, at the time of his first entering the Narraganset country, a great contest was raging between Canonicus and Miantonomi on one side, and Massasoit or Ousamequin on the other. Williams, at this time, had come to the resolution of settling at Seekonk, on a part of the lands belonging to the latter sachem. But should actual hostilities be commenced between these tribes, his situation would become peculiarly dangerous, occupying as he would, lands on the frontiers of the weaker party. The Narragansets might regard his settlement as a mere trading establishment, supplying their enemies with arms. Besides, the Narragansets and Wampanoags, in many instances, laid claim to the same lands. [See note to stanza thirty-third, canto fourth.] To obtain a peaceable possession of these lands it was necessary to have the consent of both. A reconciliation, therefore, of the contending tribes became indispensable. Williams incidentally mentions that he travelled between them to satisfy them of his intentions to live peaceably by them, and it is hardly possible that the equally necessary object of their reconciliation was neglected. Indeed, we find, shortly after Williams entered their country, these chiefs, so recently hostile, amicably granting their lands to him and his associates, and one of them yielding to the authority of the other. Hence we may infer that Williams not only attempted to pacify them, but that his efforts were crowned with success.

Ousamequin, or Ashumequin, was the name of the Wampanoag chief, until about the time of the Pequot war, when he assumed the name of Massasoit, or Massasoyt, for it is variously written. The latter is used in the text as that by which he is most generally designated. It was common for the Indians to change their names. That of Miantonomi was originally Mecumeh.

STANZA VIII.

The Narraganset hatchet stained with gore—
Miantonomi lifts it o'er his head,
Gives the loud battle yell, and names our valiant dead.

To name the dead was considered a great indignity, and, among chiefs, a sufficient cause for war. Philip pursued one who had thus offended to Nantucket. The life of the offender was saved only by the interference of the whites. To avoid uttering the names of the dead they used circumlocutions, such as *Sachem-aupan*, *Nes-mat-aupan;* the sachem that was here, our brother that was here.

STANZA XI.

And Annawan, who saw in after times
Brave Metacom, and all of kindred blood,
Slain, or enslaved and sold to foreign climes.

Metacom was the original name of Philip. Anawan was the last of Philip's captains that fell into the hands of the English. He was with Philip at the time he was surprised and slain. Church, giving an account of the battle, says, "By this time the enemy perceived they were waylaid on the east of the swamp, and tacked short about. One of the enemy, who seemed to be a great surly old fellow, hallooed with a loud voice, and often called out, 'Iootash! Iootash!' Captain Church called to his Indian, Peter, and asked who that was that called so. He answered that it was Annawan, Philip's great captain, calling to his soldiers to stand to it, and fight stoutly."

STANZA XIX.

Scarce do they leave a scant and narrow place,
Where we may spread the blanket of our race.

"We have not room to spread our blankets," was a phrase by which the Indians signified that they were straightened in their possessions.—*See Heekwelder.*

STANZA XXII.

"'Tis not the peag," said the Sagamore,
"Nor knives, nor guns, nor garments red as blood,
That buy the lands I hold dominion o'er —
Lands that were fashioned by the red man's God;
But to my friend I give."

Williams says the Indians were very shy and jealous of selling their lands to any, and chose rather to make a grant of them to such as they affected; but at the same time expected such gratuities and rewards as made an Indian gift often times a very dear bargain.

Of Peag there were two sorts — the white and black. The former was called Wampom or Wampum, the latter Suckauhock. The first was wrought from the white, the last from the black or purple part of a shell.

STANZA LXI.

Westward till now his course did Waban draw;
He shunned Weybosset, the accustomed ford.

I am informed that Weybosset, in the Indian language, signified a ford, or crossing place. It is now the name of a street in Providence, extending southwesterly from the place in the river so designated by the Indians.

STANZA LXII..

And fast doth Indian town to town succeed,
Some large, some small, in populous array.

"In the Narraganset country (which is the chief people in the land) a man shall come to many townes, some bigger, some lesser, it may be a dozen in 20 miles travell."— *Williams' Key.*

STANZA LXIV.

For they were gone to Potowomet's fires.

The words *Note* or *Yote* signified fire; *Potowash*, to make fire; *Wame* signified all, and *Et* is a termination denoting place. If this be so, it would seem that Potowamet, signified the place of all the fires, or places where all the tribes assembled and kindled their council or festal fires. The shell-fish, in which the shores of Potowomet abound, and the numerous remains of Indian feasts found on the upland, offer additional proof of the correctness of this inference.

CANTO FOURTH.

STANZA II.

There bristled darts — there glittered lances sheen.

Lances were arms which distinguished their sachems and other leaders. At this early period the Indians had scarcely become familiarized to the use of fire-arms. The French and Dutch had indeed begun to supply them with these strange implements of death; but the English colonists had taken every precaution to prevent their being furnished with them. There were, however, no restraints on the trade of knives, hatchets, lances, &c.

STANZA XX.

On settles raised around the mounting blaze
Sit gray Wauontom, Keenomp, Sagamore.

Wauontom, a counsellor; Keenomp, a captain; Sagamore, a chief or sachem.

Is sage Canonicus.

Williams considered Canonicus, at the time he wrote his Key to the Indian Languages, about fourscore years old.

STANZA XXI.

The Neyhom's mantle did his shoulders grace.

"Neyhomaushunck, a coat or mantle curiously made of the fairest plumes of the Neyhommauog, or turkies, which commonly their old men make, and is with them as velvet with us."—*Williams' Key.*

STANZA XXXIII.

Yes, ere he came, Pocasset's martial band
Did at our bidding come to fight the foe,
And the tall warriors of the Nipnet land
Rushed with soft foot to bend our battle bow;
And e'en the dog of Haup did cringing stand
Beside our wigwam, and his tribute show.

The reader will not expect in the text minute historical accuracy, yet it has been the wish of the author, throughout, not to violate KNOWN historical truth; and the following facts, he thinks, give something more than mere probability to the presumption, that Massasoit was, before the arrival of the whites, in some sense, one of the subject sachems of the Narraganset chiefs. The following extract of a deposition of Williams, dated at Narraganset, the 18th of June, A. D. 1682, will shew that Canonicus had authority of some sort over Massasoit, and that the latter had claims, subordinate to those of Canonicus, to certain lands which Williams procured of the last named chief. In this deposition Williams says, "I desire posterity to see the most gracious hand of the Most High, (in whose hands are all things,) that when the hearts of my countrymen and friends and brethren failed me, his infinite wisdom and merits stirred up the barbarous heart of Canonicus to love me as his own son to the last gasp, by which I had not only Miantonomi and all the Coweset sachems my friends, but Ousamequin also, who, because of my great friendship for him at Plymouth, and the authority of Canonicus, consented freely, (being also well gratified by me,) to the Governor Winthrop's and my enjoyment of Prudence, yea of Providence itself, and

all other parts I procured which were upon the point, and in effect, whatever I desired of him." A distinction seems here to be intended between Prudence and other places. It is probable that Prudence was conquered by the Narragansets, whilst in possession of some under-sachem of Massasoit. And when the latter renounced all claims to this Island, he at the same time assured to Williams the peaceable enjoyment of Providence and all other places purchased of him.

A similar state of things appears in the deed, made by Canonicus and Miantonomi to the settlers of Aquidnay, to have existed both in reference to that island and a part of Pokanoket, where Massasoit resided. This deed or memorandum is as follows: "We, Canonicus and Miantonomi, the two chief sachems of Narraganset, by virtue of our general command of the Bay, as also the particular subjecting of the dead sachem of Aquidnick and Kitackumuckqut, [Kikemuet] themselves and lands unto us, have sold unto Mr. Coddington and his friends united, the great Island of Acquidnick, lying from hence eastward in this bay, as also the marsh or grass upon Quinnannacut, [Conanicut] and the rest of the islands in the bay, (excepting Chubackuweda, formerly sold unto Mr. Winthrope, Governor of Massachusetts, and Mr. Williams of Providence,) also the grass upon the rivers and coasts about Kitakamuckqut, and from thence to Pauparquatsh [Poppasquash] for the full payment of forty fathoms of white beads."

Ousamaquin was present, and granted the use of the grass and trees on the main land, Pocasset side. Tradition points out the spot on which the battle was fought that decided the fate of Aquidnick, and assigns a date to the arrival of the English at Plymouth. Callender evidently considers it to have taken place during the great sickness or plague which prevailed among the eastern Indians before the coming of the Whites. When the English arrived, Massasoit was at Pokanoket, in a part of that territory so recently wrested by the Narragansets from (probably) one of his under-sachems. He was then in no condition to resist any of the demands of the victors, and there can be little doubt that he submitted to them as a tributary or subject chief. The arrival of the English, however, gave him allies, and enabled him to set the Narragansets at defiance. Hence the hostility of the Narragansets to the Whites; and hence Massasoit's uniform adherence to them. That Massasoit was con-

sidered by the Narragansets a tributary chief, and bound to comply with the requisitions of their sachems, is rendered very probable by the following passage in Winthrop's Journal. It is under date of April, 1632:

"The Governor received letters from Plymouth signifying that there had been a broil between their men at Sowamset and the Narraganset Indians, who set upon the English house, there to have taken Ousamaquin, the Sagamore of Pokanoscott, [Pokanoket] who fled thither with all the people for refuge, and that Captain Standish, being gone thither to relieve the English which were in the House, sent home in all haste for more men and other provisions, upon intelligence that Canonicus was coming with a great army against them. On that, they wrote to our Governor for some powder to be sent with all possible speed, for it seemed they were unprovided. Upon this the Governor presently dispatched away a messenger with so much powder as he could carry, viz: twenty-seven pounds. The messenger returned and brought a letter from the Governor, signifying that the Indians were retired from Sowamset to fight the Pequins, [Pequots] which was probable; because John Sagamore and Chickatabott were gone, with all their men, to Canonicus, who had sent for them."

Here Canonicus, on the point of marching against the Pequots, sent to certain sachems of Massachusetts to join him; there is little doubt that the same requisition was made of Massasoit, and attempted to be enforced. He took shelter, however, under the English, and the Narragansets finding that they could not compel obedience without involving themselves in a war with the English, retired and prosecuted the expedition without his assistance. But in 1636, when they were somewhat relieved from the pressure of their enemies, they were probably about engaging in a war with the Wampanoags, to punish this contempt of their chief's authority. Hence the great contest to which Williams alludes.

As a further proof that Massasoit was in some sort a subordinate sachem of the Narraganset chiefs, it may be added, that the above deed of Aquidnick appears to have been made in his presence, and that he and his tribe were afterwards compensated for their rights in the lands conveyed. Those rights were therefore considered of a character subordinate to those of the Narraganset chiefs.

Since the foregoing remarks were written, the author has noticed a deposition of Williams, quoted by Backus, in his History of the Baptists, and dated twenty-five years after the settlement of Providence was commenced, which applies directly to the question here discussed, and abundantly confirms the views already taken. Williams, in his deposition, says, "After I had obtained this place, now called Providence, of Canonicus and Miantonomi, [the chief Nanhiganset sachems,] Osamaquin laid his claim to this place also. This forced me to repair to the Nanhiganset sachems aforesaid, who declared that Osamaquin was their subject, and had solemnly, himself in person with ten men, subjected himself and his lands unto them at the Nanhiganset, only now he seemed to revolt from his loyalty, under the shelter of the English at Plymouth. This I declared from the Nanhiganset sachems to Osamaquin, who without any stick acknowledged to be true that he had so subjected, as the Nanhiganset sachems had affirmed; [but] that he was not subdued by war, which himself and his father had maintained against the Nanhigansets; but God, said he, subdued us by a plague which swept away my people, and forced me to yield."

STANZA XXXV.

They were the Yengee's men, not ours, they said.

"He [Massasoit] also talked of the French, bidding us not to suffer them to come to Narrohiganset; for it was King James' his country, and he was King James his man." — *Mourt's Journal.*

STANZA XXXVII.

He speaks a Manitoo!

"There is a general custom among them," says Williams. "at the apprehension of any excellence in men or women, birds, beasts, or fish, &c., to cry out Manittoo! that is, it is a god; as thus, if they see one man excel others in wisdom, valor, strength, or activity, they cry out Manittoo!"

STANZA XLI.

And for the Pequot deeds Awanux grieves.

"News came to Plymouth that Captain Stone, who last summer went out of the Bay or Lake, and so to Aquawaticus, where he took in Captain Norton, putting in at the mouth of Connecticut, (on his way to Virginia,) where the Pequins [Pequots] inhabit, was cut off with all his company, being eight in number."— *Winthrop's Journal.*

STANZA XLV.

If true he spake—that should his actions show—
May not his heart be darker than yon cloud,
And yet his words white as yon falling snow?
Still if his speech were true—

"Canonicus, the old high sachem of the Narraganset bay, (a wise and peaceable prince), once in a solemn oration to myself, in a solemn assembly, using this word, [Wannaumwayean, if he speak true,] said, I have never suffered any wrong to be offered to the English since they landed, nor never will. He often repeated this word, Wannaumwayean, Englishman, if the Englishman speak true, if he meane truly; then shall I goe to my grave in peace, and hope that the English and my posteritie shall live in love and peace together. I replied that he had no cause (as I hoped) to question the Englishman's Wannaumauonck, that is, faithfulnesse, he having had long experience of their faithfulnesse and trustinesse. He took a stick and broke it into ten pieces, and related ten instances, (laying down a stick at every instance), which gave him cause thus to feare and say. I satisfied him on some presently, and presented the rest to the governors of the English, who I hope will be far from giving just cause to have barbarians question their Wannaumwauonck of faithfulnesse."— *Williams' Key.*

STANZA XLVII.

This fragment shows the serpent's skin they sent,
Filled with round thunders to our royal tent.

"The people called Narragansets," says the N. E. Memorial, "sent messengers unto our plantations with a bundle of arrows tied together with a snake-skin, which the interpreter told them was a threatening and a challenge, upon which the Governor of Plymouth sent them a rough answer, viz.: That, if they loved war better than peace, they might begin when they would; they had done them no wrong, neither did they fear them, nor should they find them unprovided; and by another messenger they sent the snake-skin back again, with bullets in it; but they would not receive it, but sent it back again." Mr. Davis in a note adds: "The messenger was accompanied by a friendly Indian, Tockamahamon. The messenger inquired for Squanto, who was absent. The bundle of arrows was left for him, and the messenger departed without any explanation. When Squanto returned, and the dubious present was delivered him, he immediately understood the object." The planters, however, seem to have considered themselves threatened. They immediately began to strengthen their defences, and every precaution was taken against a surprise.

STANZA XLVIII.

This, when at Sowans raged our battle loud,
How their round thunders made that battle dumb.

See the passage from Winthrop, in note to stanza xxxiii.

This how amid the Pequot nation they
Build the square lodge, and whet him to the fray.

The Plymouth Company had established a trading house on the Connecticut, as early as 1633. Their trade with the Pequots in arrow points, knives, hatchets, &c., might very probably give offence to the Narragansets. "We found," says Winthrop, "that all the sachems of Narraganset, except Canonicus and Miantonomi were the contrivers of Mr. Oldham's death, and the occasion was because he went to make peace and trade with the Pequots."

CANTO FIFTH.

STANZA XI.

Brother, the spirit of my son is gone;
I burned my lodge to speak my mighty grief.

Williams says, "The chiefe and most aged peaceable father of the countrey, Canonnicus, having buried his sonne, he burned his own palace, and all his goods in it, (amongst them to a great value), in a solemn remembrance of his son, and in a kind of humble expiation to the gods, who (as they believe) had taken away his sonne from him."

I am thy father, thou shalt be my son.

See the extract from Williams' testimony, in note to stanza xxii, of canto iv.

STANZA XXIV.

The sable fox-hide did his loins enclose—
The sable fox-tail formed his nodding crest.

The Indians had a superstitious regard for the black fox. Williams says, they considered it a Manittoo—a god, spirit, or divine power.

STANZA XXXII.

Hast thou forgot, when, by Cohannet's stream,
To curse the strangers every charm was tried.

"But before I pass on, let the reader take notice of a very remarkable particular which was made known to the planters at Plymouth some short space after their arrival; that the Indians, before they came to the English to make friendship with them, got all the Pawaws in the country, who, for three days together, in a horrid and devilish manner, did curse and execrate them

with their conjurations, which assembly and service they held in a dark and dismal swamp."—*N. E. Memorial.*

How I appeared, and, by the embers' gleam,
To the hard rock my lance's point applied,
And scored my mandate.

The inscriptions on the rocks by Taunton river have afforded a subject of much speculation to the antiquary. It would not be strange if the indians ascribed to them a supernatural origin.

STANZA XLII.

An odor, strange, though not offensive, spread
About him, as he near and nearer drew;

If my recollection serves me, Dr. Good, in his Book of Nature, supposes that the seeming power of fascination in serpents may arise from an odor emitted by them. The tale of the Hunter and the Rattlesnake, in the New England Legends, must furnish the author with a justification for the use which he has made of this serpent in the text; and it ought also to be added, that his description of the serpent, in the act of exercising his mysterious powers, is not essentially different from that in the tale to which he has referred.

STANZA LXII.

Here stretched Aquidnay tow'rd the ocean blue.

Aquidnay is the Indian name for Rhode Island. This name is variously written—sometimes Aquidneck, sometimes Aquetnet, and sometimes Aquidnet. Winthrop generally writes it Aquidnay, and the author has chosen so to write it, for no other reason, than that the sound is a little more agreeable. There is some reason to conclude that Aquetnet is nearer its true etymology. See the following note.

STANZA LXX.

Another sachem sways
The Isle of peace.

Aquene signified, in the Narraganset dialect, peace. It is possible that Aquetnet, as the name of this island has been some-

times written, may be its derivative; *et* is a termination usually denoting place. But whether this be or be not its etymology, the designation is not inapplicable, since the island must have been a place of security against the roving Maquas, Pequots, Tarrateens, &c.

STANZA LXXII.

There Sowams gleamed,—if names the muse aright,
Till in the forest far his glories fade;

Calender intimates that Sowams is properly the name of a river, where the two Swansey rivers meet and run together for near a mile, when they empty themselves in the Narraganset Bay. Sowamset may, therefore, indicate some town or other place on the banks of the river. These names have been used by some as synonymous.

CANTO SIXTH.

STANZA III.

Who with the laboring axe,
On Seekonk's eastern marge, invades the wood?

Nothing is said of Williams, by the histories of the age, from the time he left Salem, until his expulsion from Seekonk, afterwards called Rehoboth. We learn, from some of Williams' letters, that, after purchasing land from Massasoit, he there built and planted, before he was informed by Governor Winslow that he was within the limits of the Plymouth patent. Until this information, he had supposed himself to be beyond the limits of either Plymouth or Massachusetts. And, certainly, the language of the Plymouth patent was sufficiently equivocal to countenance almost any construction of it in reference to the western (otherwise called southern) bounds of its grant. I will transcribe its words, that the reader may judge for himself. It grants the lands "lying between Cohasset rivulet toward the north, and Narraganset river toward the south, the great Western Ocean toward the east, and a straight line, extending into the main land toward the west, from the mouth of Narraganset

river to the utmost bounds of a country called Pokanoket, alias Sowamset, and another straight line, extending directly from the mouth of Cohasset river toward the west, so far into the main land westward, as the utmost limits of Pokanoket, alias Sowamset."

What is here intended by Narraganset river? Is it the bay or some river falling into the bay? Was it intended by the utmost bounds of Pokanoket? Do the words of the patent include or exclude that territory? The truth is, that the geography of the country was, at that time, very imperfectly understood, and the words of the patent are not a true description of the territory to be granted. The charter of Rhode Island is a proof that the Plymouth patent was not considered as embracing within its limits what is called Pokanoket, alias Sowamset; since that charter covers a considerable part of that very territory. But, if Pokanoket was not included by the Plymouth patent, Williams ought not to have been treated as a trespasser. It is not my purpose to discuss the question of boundaries. These observations are made for the purpose of showing that Williams had his reasons for believing that he was out of the jurisdiction of Plymouth.

STANZA XXII.

And brandishing his blade, he jeering said,
That vengeance gave it eyes and appetite;
It soon would eat—but eat in silence dread.

"He [an Indian slain by Standish] bragged of the excellency of his knife: *Hinnaim namen, hinnaim michen, matta cuts:* that is to say, by and by it should see, by and by it should eat, but not speak."

CANTO SEVENTH.

STANZA V.

His flock no more,—with strifes now sorely riven.

The opinions for which Williams was banished, were but the beginning of schism in the Massachusetts churches, and his banishment but the commencement of persecution. Many members of the church of Salem still adhered to him, and finally followed him to Providence.

STANZA XXI.

O'er yonder distant brow
Smokes in the vale Neponset's peopled town.

Neponset is the name of a river in Massachusetts. On the banks of this river there seem to have been several Indian towns or villages, at the time of Williams' banishment.

STANZA LVII.

And by the lock he held a trunkless head.

"Timequassin, to cut off, or behead, which they are most skillful to do in fight."—*Williams' Key.*

CANTO EIGHTH.

STANZA XVI.

Who cannot see,
That a dark cloud o'er our New England lowers?
The tender conscience struggles to be free—
The tyrant struggles, and retains his power.

Williams seems to have had a strong presentiment that a season of persecution was approaching, and often expressed a desire that his plantation *might be a shelter for persons distressed for conscience.*

STANZA XIX.

And there this eve some reasoning, I opine,
(For all may err) a weighty theme upon,
May not be deemed amiss.

It was the first intention of the author to have drawn the materials of the conversation in the text from the controversy between Williams and Cotton; but, on examination, he was satisfied that it was not suited to a performance of this kind. This controversy originated as follows: A prisoner (one who was doubtless suffering for heretical opinions) addressed a letter to a Mr. Hall, in which he discussed and argued against the right of government to persecute for matters of conscience. Hall sent this letter to Mr. Cotton, who answered it. Hall, dissatisfied with the answer, transmitted it to Williams. In the hands of Williams it remained some time; for he was struggling with all the difficulties incident to his situation at Providence. He however composed a reply to Cotton's answer, which he entitled the Bloody Tenent. He says it was written whilst engaged at the hoe and oar, toiling for bread — whilst attending on Parliament — in a change of rooms and places; in a variety of strange houses; sometimes in the field, in the midst of travel; where he had been forced to gather and scatter his loose thoughts and papers. And, certainly, considering the circumstances in which it was composed, it is a work calculated to increase our admiration of the man. The Bloody Tenent, together with Mr. Cotton's answer to the prisoner's letter, was published in London, at a time when his Puritan brethren in England were addressing him and others in Massachusetts, with most earnest remonstrances against their cruel persecutions of other denominations.

He, in his replies, had been endeavoring to extenuate and excuse the conduct of the civil government, and had taken particular care to exculpate himself. It is easy, therefore, to conceive what a shock this reverend dignitary must have suffered, when his answer to the prisoner's letter, which went in principle the full length of the most unsparing persecution, together with Williams' reply, was published and circulated among the brethren there. He instantly raised a cry, that Williams was *persecuting him*, by publishing his answer to the prisoner's let-

ter, and commenting upon it. But he felt himself under the necessity of doing something more. His brethren in England would require some sort of justification, and one consistent with the sentiments he had already expressed in his letters to them. Hence the controversy between him and Williams, is, on the part of Cotton, a sophistical attempt to avoid the charge of persecuting for matters of conscience. We do not persecute consciences, says he, but we do punish those who commit violence on their own consciences. If the reader should be so curious as to inquire, how Mr. Cotton ascertained when a man committed violence on his own conscience, I will state his process as I understand it. When it was discovered that any member entertained opinions inconsistent with the fundamental doctrines of the order to which he belonged, he was in the first place called before the church, and admonished of his error. If he still persisted, he was summoned before the magistracy, where the charges were specified, and the magistracy determined whether he was or was not convinced in his own mind of his errors. His judges never failed to be satisfied that he was convinced. If the accused afterwards persisted in his opinions, he was considered as one committing violence on his own conscience, and treated as an incorrigible heretic and disturber of the peace, and as such banished, imprisoned, scourged, or hanged, as the enormity of his heretical opinions might require. I have necessarily given the conversation between Williams and the Plymouth elder a turn different from that of the controversy between him and Cotton; but have endeavored to preserve something of the tone of feeling which pervades the latter. I flatter myself, however, that the Plymouth elder is a more moderate man than Mr. Cotton. As a proof, hear Mr. Cotton in his own words set forth the advantages which a state derives from persecuting heretics, and the summary mode in which the civil magistrate may deal with them.

To the question of Williams, What glory to God — what good to the souls and bodies of their subjects, did these princes bring in persecuting? Mr. Cotton thus replies: "The good that is brought to princes and subjects, by the due punishment of apostate seducers and idolaters and blasphemers, is manifold.

First; it putteth away evil from the people, and cutteth off a gangrene which would spread to further ungodliness.

Secondly; It driveth away wolves from worrying and scattering the sheep of Christ; (for false teachers be wolves.)

Thirdly; Such executions upon such evil doers causeth all the country to hear and fear, and do no more such wickedness.

Fourthly; The punishments, executed upon false prophets and seducing teachers, do bring down showers of God's blessings upon the civil state.

Fifthly; It is an honor to God's justice that such judgments are executed."

He says, "If there be stones in the streets the magistrate need not fetch a sword from the smith's shop, nor a halter from the roper's, to punish a heretic."

It will appear that time has made no improvement upon the leading principles of Williams, as gathered from different parts of his replies to Cotton. He says that "the people are the origin of all free power in government." "That the people are not invested by Christ Jesus with power to rule his Church." That they can give no such power to the magistrate. "That the kingdom of Christ is spiritual" — that to introduce the civil sword into this spiritual kingdom is "to confound Heaven and earth together, and lay all upon heaps of confusion" — "Is to take Christ and make him king by force (John vi, 15) — to make his kingdom of this world — to set up a civil and temporal Israel — to bound out new earthy lands of Canaan; yea, and to set up a Spanish inquisition, in all parts of the world, to the speedy destruction of millions of souls," &c.

Cotton says, "that when the kingdoms of this earth become the kingdoms of the Lord, it is not by making Christ a temporal king; but by making the temporal kingdoms nursing fathers to the Church" — "that religion was not to be propagated by the sword; but protected and preserved by it."

Williams replies, "that the husbandman weeds his garden to increase his grain, and that consequently it is the object of the hand that destroys the heretic to make the Christian" — "That the sword may make a nation of hypocrites, but not of Christians," &c.

I have thrown together these few detached sentences, that the reader, who may have little inclination to peruse a controversy on a question which happily has no place in the present age,

may form some opinion of its character. The discussion occupies two considerable volumes.

STANZA XLI.

Williams, he said, it is my thankless lot,
Thee with no pleasant message now to meet;
Nor hath our Winslow, in his charge forgot
(For his behest I bear and words repeat)
His former friendship, but right loth is he
To vex his neighbors by obliging thee.

After Williams had built and planted at Seekonk, he was visited by a messenger from Plymouth with a letter from Winslow, then Governor. Professing his and others' friendship for him, he lovingly advised Williams, since he had fallen into the edge of their bounds, and they were loath to displease the Bay, to remove but to the other side of the water, and there he had the country before him, and might be as free as themselves, and they should be loving neighbors together.—See Williams' letter to Mason. Mass. His. Col.

STANZA XLV.

Thy purchase feigned was by the prophet shown
To Dudley, and by him to us made known.

Williams, in his letter to Mason, says, that Governor Winthrop and some of the council of Massachusetts were disposed to recall him from banishment, and confer upon him some mark of distinguished favor for his services. "It is known," says Williams, "who hindered—who never promoted the liberty of other men's consciences." Mr. Davis, in a note to his edition of the New England Memorial, conjectures that he alludes to Mr. Dudley. The reader will not consider me as doing violence to historical probability, by supposing that this man gave information to the magistrates of Plymouth that Williams had established himself within the limits of their patent, and re-

quired his expulsion. He was the author of the following lines:

"Let men of God in courts and churches watch
O'er such as do a toleration hatch,
Lest that ill egg bring forth a cockatrice
To poison all with heresy and vice.
If men be left and otherwise combine,
My epitaph 's I dy'd no libertine."

Yet we ought, perhaps, to blame the system, rather than the magistrate whose duty it was to carry it into effect.

STANZA XLVII.

God gave James Stuart this, and James gave us.

The patents of the companies which settled in this country granted them lands without any reference to the rights of the natives. But the companies never availed themselves of these grants to that extent. Whatever may have been their opinions, they acted under them as if they had only invested them with the right of pre-emption. Cotton Mather is the only historian, that I recollect, who makes a merit of paying the Indians for their lands, and of not expelling them immediately from the soil in virtue of these patents.

CANTO NINTH.

STANZA III.

Early that morn, beside the tranquil flood,
Where, ready trimmed, rode Waban's frail canoe,
The banished man, his spouse and children stood,
And bade their lately blooming hopes adieu.

I have represented Williams, throughout this narrative, as unaccompanied by any of his Salem friends. And such, I think, was the fact up to the time he left, or was about leaving, Seekonk. Indeed, there was no necessity for any of his friends to accompany him in his flight from Salem "in the winter's snow." They could render him no assistance in negotiations with the Indians.—They could not alleviate his hardships by participat-

ing in them. But what seems to settle the question, (if in fact it be a question) is, that he himself, though he frequently alludes to his sufferings and transactions "during the bitter cold winter," no where intimates that any white man participated in them. He uniformly speaks in the first person singular: "I was sorely tossed for fourteen weeks—I left Salem in the winter's snow—I found a great contest going on between the chiefs—I travelled between them—I first pitched and began to build and plant at Seekonk—I received a message from Mr. Winslow—I crossed the Seekonk and settled at Mooshausick." It is strange that he should, on no occasion, mention that some of his friends suffered with him, if any actually did. All accurate information concerning Williams, during these fourteen weeks, must, I apprehend, be drawn from his writings; and I have chosen to follow them. And indeed had he been accompanied by one or more of his friends, they could not have aided the author in the conduct of his narrative, any more than they could have borne a part in the trials and labors of Williams.

Williams says that he mortgaged his house and land in Salem to go through, and all that came with him afterwards were not engaged, but came and went at pleasure; but he was forced to go through and stay by it. (His purchase of the Indians.)

I have not been able to ascertain in what particular part of Seekonk Williams attempted to form his plantation, and have consequently felt myself at liberty to suppose it was in the neighborhood of Pawtucket Falls.

STANZA XXV.

"Netop, Whatcheer!" broke on the listening air.

Netop—friend. The tradition is, that when Williams in a canoe approached the western banks of the river, at a place now called Whatcheer Cove, he saw a gathering of the natives. When he had come within hail, he was accosted by them in broken English with the friendly salutation, "Wha-cheer! Whacheer!" Here he landed, and was kindly received by them. The land which was afterwards set off to him included this spot, and he commemorated the amicable greeting of his Indian friends by naming the field there assigned to him the Manor of Whatcheer, or Whatcheer Manor. This field is now the property of Governor Fenner, and the field adjoining it, which was like-

wise set forth to Williams, has continued to the present day in the possession of his descendants. We are probably indebted to the name which Williams gave the first mentioned field, for the preservation of this tradition.

STANZA XXXVII.

Ay, almost hears the future pavements jar
Beneath a people's wealth, and half divines
From thee, Soul-Liberty! what glories wait
Thy earliest altars—thy predestined state.

To show that Williams was not without a presentiment of the temporal advantages that might arise to his projected settlement, from a full liberty in religious concernments, I quote the following from his memorial to Parliament, prefixed to his Bloody Tenent made more bloody, &c. Speaking of Holland he says: "From Enchuysen, therefore, a den of persecuting lions and mountain leopards, the persecuted fled to Amsterdam, a poor fishing town, yet harborous and favorable to the flying, though dissenting consciences. This confluence of the persecuted, by God's most gracious coming with them, drew boats—drew trade—drew shipping, and that so mightily in so short a time, that shipping, trade, wealth, greatness, honor, (almost to astonishment in the eyes of all Europe and the world), have appeared to fall, as out of Heaven, in a crown or garland upon the head of this poor fishertown."

STANZA XL.

From wild Pawtucket to Pawtuxet's bounds,
To thee and thine be all the teeming grounds.

The first grant made by Canonicus and Miantonomi to Williams, appears to have been a verbal grant of all the lands and meadows upon the two fresh rivers, called Mooshausick and Wanaskatucket; but on the 24th of March, 1637, they confirmed this grant by deed, and, in consideration of the many kindnesses and services he was constantly rendering them, made the bounds Pawtuxet river on the south, Pawtucket on the northwest, and the town of Mashapauge on the west, This grant includes nearly all the county of Providence, and a part of the county of Kent.

STANZA XLI.

For, at that moment, down the boundless range
Of heavenly spheres did some bright being take
Wing to his soul, and wrought to suited change
The visual nerve, and straight in outward space
Stood manifest in its celestial grace.

This passage, it is true, supposes action on the mind by a supernatural being, but it does not suppose the outward bodily manifestation of the angelic form described. It simply supposes the image or conception, wrought in the mind by the supernatural agency, to *externize* itself through a change effected by a sympathetic action in the visual organ. Or, in other words, it supposes the internal image to become so distinct as to reflect itself into the retina and overcome the action of external objects thereon; whereby the internal image is made to appear in the field of vision as an external reality. In justification of this idea, I am glad to have it in my power to refer to No. C. of the Family Library, entitled "Outlines of Disordered Mental Action, by Professor Upham, of Bowdoin College" — p. 117.

I feel that these remarks are due to the very friendly criticism which this poem has received on the other side of the Atlantic; in which, understanding (as I suppose) the apparition to be represented as an external reality, the reviewer blames it as an extravagance not in accordance with the general character of the narrative.

STANZA XLVII.

Her well-cast anchor here — her lasting hope in Thee.

The Anchor, with the motto Hope, which formed the device on the seal of the Colony, may be considered as having reference to the dangers and difficulties through which the settlers had passed, and were passing at the time it was adopted. This was done in 1663.

STANZA XLIX.

And ages hence our children shall recite
Of thy protecting grace their Father's sense,
And, when they name their home, proclaim Thy Providence.

Williams carried the philanthropy, which breathes in his great principle of Soul-Liberty, into all the important acts of his life.

Although the munificent grant of Canonicus and Miantonomi had been made to him only, he shortly after made it the common property of his friends who joined him at Providence, reserving to himself no more than an equal share, and receiving from them the small sum of thirty pounds, not as purchase money, but as a remuneration for the gratuities which he had made to the Indians out of his own estate.

"The following passage," says Mr. Benedict, in his history of the Baptists, "explains, in a very pleasing manner, Mr. Williams's design in these transactions:" 'Notwithstanding I had frequent promise from Miantonomi, my kind friend, that it should not be land that I should want about these bounds mentioned, provided I satisfied the Indians there inhabiting, I having made covenant of peaceable neighborhood with all the sachems and natives round about us, and having *in a sense of God's merciful Providence to me in my distress, called the place Providence; I desired it might be for a shelter to persons distressed for conscience. I then considered the condition of divers of my countrymen.* I communicated my said purchase unto my loving friends, John Throckmorton and others, who then desired to take shelter here with me. And whereas, by God's merciful assistance, I was procurer of the purchase, not by moneys nor payment, the natives being so shy and jealous that moneys could not do it, but by that language — acquaintance and favor with the natives, and other advantages which it pleased God to give me, and also bore the charges and venture of all the gratuities which I gave to the great sachems and natives round about us, and lay engaged for a loving and peaceable neighborhood with them to my great charge and travel; it was therefore thought fit that I should receive some consideration and gratuity.' Thus, after mentioning the said thirty pounds, 'this sum I received, and in love to my friends and *with respect to a town and place of succor for the distressed as aforesaid,* I do acknowledge this said sum a full satisfaction,' he went on, in full and strong terms, to confirm those lands to said inhabitants, reserving no more to himself that an equal share with the rest; his wife also signing the deed."

APPENDIX.

HAVING in the preceding notes given some account of the principal events which marked the life of Williams up to the time he settled at Mooshausick, it may be agreeable to such of my readers, as have not his biography at hand, to find here some notice of the actions which distinguished the remainder of his days. The following summary is drawn chiefly from Mr. Benedict's History of the Baptists, and the Sketch of the Life of Williams annexed to the first volume of the Rhode Island Historical Collections.

Williams was soon joined at Providence by a number of his friends from Salem. In a short time their number amounted to forty persons. They then adopted a form of government, by which they admitted none to become their associates, but such as held to the principle of Religious Freedom.

The year following his settlement, a formidable conspiracy of the Indians was planned against the English colonists. He gave his persecutors information of the fact. He addressed a letter to the Commissioners of the United Colonies, "assuring them that the country would suddenly be all on fire, meaning by war—that by strong reasons and arguments he could convince any man thereof that was of another mind—that the Narragansets had been with the plantations combined with Providence, and had solemnly settled a neutrality with them, which fully shewed their counsels and resolutions for war."* Had this plot been carried into effect, it would probably have eventuated in the ruin of the colonies from which he had been banished. Instead of indulging resentment by remaining inactive, he immediately exerted himself to bring about a dissolution of the Indian confederacy. He accomplished what no other man in New England at that time would have attempted. By his influence with the Narragansets, he broke up the combination,

* *Hutchinson's State Papers.*

and formed treaties between them and the United Colonies, by which the latter had their aid in the war which followed with the Pequots.

The first four years that succeeded Williams' settlement at Providence, were necessarily occupied by him there about the affairs of the plantations. He travelled amongst the Indians, and secured the friendship of their chiefs and warriors. He promoted the settlement of Rhode Island and Warwick. Much of his time must also have been required in making provisions for the support of his family, cast out, as they were, into the depths of a savage wilderness. Soon after his settlement, he had embraced the leading tenets of the Baptists, and had been baptized. He then formed a society of this order, and preached to it; but resigned his pastoral office on his going to England to solicit the first Charter.

Not being permitted to pass through Massachusetts in order to embark on this voyage, he went by land to Manhattan, [New York,] then under the Dutch. A war between the Dutch and Indians was at that time raging with great violence. In this war, Mrs. Ann Hutchinson and family, who had been banished from Massachusetts, had fallen victims to Indian barbarities; and, as if every step of this remarkable man was to bear the impress of his benevolence, he was here instrumental in pacifying the savages, and stopping the effusion of blood. After this, he took ship for England. Whilst on this voyage, that no time might be lost in laying posterity under obligations to him, he composed his Key to the Indian Languages. This, together with his Bloody Tenent, was published on his arrival in England. Here, as agent for the colonies of Providence, Rhode Island, and Warwick, he obtained a charter of incorporation, signed by the Earl of Warwick, then Governor and Admiral of the English Plantations, and by his council.

On the 17th September, 1644, he landed at Boston, bringing a letter of recommendation to the Governor and Assistants of Massachusetts Bay, from some of the most influential members of the Long Parliament. He thus avoided the penalty incurred by entering their bounds. At the first General Assembly formed under this Charter, a law was passed establishing the most unlimited toleration in matters of conscience. Unconfined to those who professed Christianity, its provisions extended to the whole human family. I mention this, because it

has been said that Maryland furnishes the first example of a legislative act of this kind. The Maryland act was passed in 1649, and its privileges extended only to those who professed to believe in Jesus Christ.

Mr. Coddington afterwards procured a Charter, which gave him almost unlimited authority over the islands of Narragansett bay. This caused great discontent. It was called *Coddington's Obstruction*. Williams and Clark were sent to England, in 1651, to procure its revocation. They effected the object of their mission in October, 1652. Whilst in England, Williams resided with Sir Henry Vane, at his seat in Lincolnshire. He returned in 1652, and brought a letter from Sir Henry, inviting the planters to a close union. The colony, during his absence, had been distracted by many divisions. This letter, together with the earnest solicitations of Williams, restored harmony. He was several times after, as well as before this, elected to the office of President or Governor of the colony.

Williams died in 1683, at Providence, and was buried under arms, in his family burying ground, with every testimony of respect which the colony could manifest.

The religious sentiments of Williams seem to have become more and more liberal as he advanced in life. Whatever rigid forms those sentiments may have assumed, in the early part of his career, they gradually melted down, and blended themselves in that warm and deep feeling of universal benevolence, which had given birth to his great principle of Soul-Liberty. The dominion of that feeling, over every other in his breast, is sufficiently indicated by the firmness with which he adhered to this principle in circumstances the most trying. This feeling naturally sought for a congenial nature in other breasts, and Williams soon learned that there were good men in all societies. He freely joined in worship with all, and imparted his instructions to all who were disposed to hear him. This liberality, however, was not inconsistent with theological discussions, in which he occasionally participated. His dispute with the Friends gave umbrage to some of that order. It occupied two or three days, and eventuated by a publication by Williams, entitled "George Fox digged out of his burroughs." Although some of this order seem, for a time, to have remembered this dispute to his disadvantage, yet there were others who cher-

ished for him the kindest and most respectful feelings. Among these was Governor Jenks, who though a Quaker, bestows the highest praise on Williams, both as a man and a Christian.

When not engaged abroad on business of the colony, he statedly preached to the Indians in Narraganset; and those amongst them, who would hear no one else, were attentive to him. That branch of the Narragansets, called the Nianticks, seem to have been an object of his peculiar care. They were so far Christianized by his labors that they took no part in Philip's war, and their present existence, as the only remnant of a once powerful people, may be traced to the effects of his ministry.

Williams retained his influence with the Indians nearly to the last of his and their existence. While Philip was making preparation for war, in 1671, commissioners were sent to Taunton to inquire into the cause. Philip, suspicious of their design, remained in his camp; and when summoned by the commissioners to meet them, he required that they should meet him. Matters remained in this posture until Williams, then seventy years old, with a Mr. Brown offered to become a hostage in his camp. Philip then met the commissioners, delivered up seventy guns and promised fidelity. This event gave the colony four years to prepare for the final struggle.

Whilst, in 1676, this cruel and exterminating war was raging, the Indians approached the town of Providence. Williams, it is said, on seeing their advance, still feeling his wonted confidence in his influence over them, took his staff and left the garrison. But some of the old warriors on seeing him approach, advanced from the main body, and told him, that as for themselves they would do him no harm, nor would any amongst them who had long known him, but their young men could not be restrained. Upon which he returned to the garrison.

ADDENDA.

ADDENDA.

LIFE'S VOYAGE.

THERE rose, amid the boundless flood,
A little island green;
And there a simple race abode
That knew no other scene;

Save that a vague tradition ran,
That all the starry skies
Bore up a brighter race of man,
Robed in the rainbow's dyes.

A youth there was of ardent soul,
Who viewed the azure hue,
And saw the waves of ocean roll
Against its circle blue.

He launched his skiff, with bold intent
To seek the nations bright,
And o'er the rolling waters went,
For many a day and night.

His lusty arms did stoutly strain,
Nor soon their vigor spent:
All hope was he right soon to gain
And climb the firmament;

Where glorious forms, in garments bright,
Dipped in the rainbow's dyes,
And streets, star-paved, should lend their light
To his enraptured eyes.

And then might he his isle regain,
Fraught with a dazzling freight,
And lead his kindred o'er the main
To that celestial state.

But, whilst he plied the bended oar,
The island left his view;
And yet afar his bark before,
The azure circle flew.

Yet flattering hope did still sustain
And give him vigor new;
But still before him o'er the main
Retired the circle blue.

Though whirlpools yawned; and tempests frowned
And beat upon his head,
And billows burst his bark around,
Hope on that phantom fed;

Nor yet had ceased his labors vain,
Had not his vigor failed,
And 'neath the fever of his brain,
His vital spirit quailed.

Then Death appeared upon the sea,
An angel fair and bright;
For he is not what mortals say—
A grim and haggard sprite.

And, "Thou dost chase," he said, "my child!
A phantom o'er the main;
But though it has thy toils beguiled,
Thou hast not toiled in vain.

"Thou hast thus roused each slumbering might,
And framed thy soul to be
Fit now to climb yon starry height;—
Come, then, and follow me."

HYMN BY TWILIGHT.

See the hues of evening fading
From the sky and tranquil bay;
See the groves, with deeper shading,
Brown the dale as fails the ray.

Hear the distant torrent falling,
Hear the note of whip-poor-will,
Hear the shepherd homeward calling
Flocks that bleat on lonely hill.

See yon cloud the distance glooming,
Hear its far-off thunder roar,
Hear the distant ocean's booming
Billows beat the eternal shore.

God is in the hues of heaven
Fading from the sky and bay;
God is in the shades of even,
That chase the heavenly hues away.

God is in the torrent falling,
In the song of whip-poor-will,
In the voice of shepherd calling,
In the bleating on the hill,

In the cloud the distance glooming,
In the distant thunder's roar,
In the far-off ocean booming
On his everlasting shore.

God ! Thou art all substance wreathing
Into forms that suit thy will;
God ! Thou art through all things breathing
One harmonious anthem still.

REYNARD'S SOLILOQUY.

(From the School of Queen Mab.)

Halloo ! halloo ! Wild woodland now !
How the twinkling stars look down !
And rocky and rude is the mountain's brow,
And dark is the forest's frown.
Ha ! ha ! the dens and brambled fens
My wild eyes laugh to greet,
And over the clifts and rocky rifts
Right merrily dance my feet.

Pure is the gale, and odors rise
From the wild woodland hill;
Wo-hoo ! Wo-hoo ! the dark owl cries,
And shrilly the whip-poor-will ;
But the deep tone of the owlet's moan
Is a note of courage all free,
And the whip-poor-will's trill beneath the hill
Gives music and motion to me.

The farmers' geese are very well fed,
And fat and sleek are they ;—
The blood-hound lies in his dreamy bed,
So let me seek my prey.
On drumming wings the partridge springs,
As over the brakes I fly ;
But soon, like specks, the lily-white necks
Will float before my eye.

Ha! ha! I'll pause upon this height;
The village is all in view;
The two-legged bodies are still to-night,
And I'll the game pursue.
But hark! — I hear a sound, I fear—
'Tis surely not yet day—
O! 'tis the sound of the opening hound—
Away! away! away!

O'er bush, o'er brake, o'er rock I go,
But nearer they come, I fear;
Far off huzzas the two-legged foe—
Wow! wow! — the hounds are near.
I'll double my track, I'll run me back,
I'll pother the beagles some—
Now for my den I'll strain again,
And gain my mountain home.

A SUMMONS TO THE COUNTRY.

Is it to sit within thy stately hall,
Or tread the crowded street, thy chief delight?
From all her heights and depths though Nature call
Thee to her charms — though grove, and plain, and height,
Warble for thee — though Ocean's stormy might
Thunder for thee — though the starred heavens sublime
Shine out for thee — though peering orient bright
O'er mountain wood, the sire of day and time
Doth call for thee — and with retiring light
Glance down his hues from their celestial clime
To lure thee forth;— yet can all these excite
In thy cold breast no chord's responsive chime?
Still wilt thou choose a prison-yard and cell?—
Well! God forgive thy choice, for thou dost penance well.

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